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Roving Ben

A Story of a Young American Who
Wanted to See the World.

BY JOHN J. MARSHALL.

CHAPTER I.

RUNNING AWAY.

ON the afternoon of the day on which I was nineteen years old, I sat on the broad top rail of the old fence which ran between the orchard and the farm-yard. Looking back, now, to that time, the scene rises before me, and as I was the central figure of the picture, I will describe myself:

A sun-browned boy—rather tall and slender for his age—dressed in brown linen trowsers and jacket, with brown hair, curly at the ends, cropping out beneath an old straw hat, which had seen better days. A pair of legs—awkward, as boys' legs always are—with the usual terminus of a pair of feet—in this case bare—stretched themselves along the smooth breadth of the favorite rail, basking in the heat of a July sun. As you could not see the color of his eyes—they being fixed intently upon the book which he was reading—I will tell you that they were dark-blue. As for his countenance, it was remarkable for nothing, perhaps, except for the expression of keen interest in the volume. He leaned back against the cross-rails, while the boughs of the great apple-tree over his head lifted themselves lightly in the soft breeze, making a thousand rippling lights and shadows over the ragged hat, the earnest countenance and the linen jacket of the lad, whose name was Benjamin Perry—in other words, myself.

I remember how the farm looked that time, for, after that day, I did not see it again very soon—never as it then was, nor occupied by the same people. Before me was the great red barn, flanked by straw-stacks—those golden habitations of fun and frolic, which had given my childhood more joy than as if every straw had been a bar of the yellow metal, stamped with the "U. S. M."—straw-stacks, cattle-sheds, and a cider-mill. Behind the barn stretched the ten-acre meadow to the brook, which glittered along its margin like a silver fringe. Beyond the brook arose low hills, and beyond these the somber range of the Catskills, with one blue glimpse of the lovely Hudson gleaming through. Low lines of stone-fence checkered the farm into orchard, meadow, and wheat-fields—the latter standing under the blue heavens nearly ripe for the scythe, with the same soft wind which stirred the apple-boughs waving over its golden billows. If the grain had been a little riper, I should not have had leisure to sit on the fence and read books, at two o'clock of the day; but father had concluded to give it another drink of the mellow sunshine.

At my right—as I sat facing the barn—the old stone farm-house, capped with red wooden gables and a steep roof, nestled amid peach-trees and lilac-bushes. A path led along the edge of the orchard, past the well, with its tall sweep, up to the side-door, which opened into the living-room, where I could have seen, had I looked up, my mother, sitting in the arm-chair,



mending a pair of trowsers for her afternoon's bit of fancy-work. And fancy-work it must have been, if great ingenuity and a multitude of stitches, required in the earnest effort to keep a hard-working husband and four careless boys "respectable," could be honored by the appellation.

But I did not look up. The sun beat down hotter and more hot; the breeze died away, almost entirely. I sweltered on my perch, and felt a lively pleasure in the perspiration which trickled down my face, for I had lost my bearings, and supposed I was sitting under the shade

of a palm-tree, and that the sun's rays, falling upon the burning sands of the desert, was what made it so intolerably fervid in my vicinity. The fact is, I was reading a book of travels, and, as usual, had become so absorbed as to lose my own identity in that of the traveler. This was a favorite pastime of mine, which gave deep displeasure to my father, from the fear, perhaps, that it would beget a roving disposition in his oldest boy, upon whom he felt he had a right to depend to lighten his own toils.

The hours rolled on. I had worked myself up to a fever of torrid delight, and was just busy

giving a gold sequin to a dark-browed slave, for adjusting the pack on the back of my camel, while I wiped from my forehead the sweat produced by the fierce sun of Asia, when a sharp "thwack" across my back made me jump so suddenly that I lost my balance, and tumbled to the ground.

"Pick yourself up, sir; and the next time I give you an order, let me find it obeyed. You haven't put them stone back in their place, nor you don't mean to, I reckon."

I did pick myself up, and look at my father. No danger of dreaming myself in Asia any longer. He held an ox-gad in his hand. He had been down to the village with the team, and, on returning, had seen that that portion of the stone-fence which had tumbled in by the road-side, and which he had directed me to repair, remained unmolested in its ruined condition. I had been speculating over the stone of the Pyramids instead of the cobble-stones of New York. The pain of the blow was stinging, and this rude recall to my barren and hard-worked life more stinging still. For an instant, I raised my hand to return the blow, but it fell to my side again. My own parent had insulted and outraged me, but I could not strike him. At that moment, I think I hated him. And, indeed, he had done very little to make his children love him, but to exact their service, as if they were slaves instead of children. He ruled, literally, with a rod—if not of iron, of elastic hazel. Poor man! he had been brought up in that hard manner himself, and thought he was doing his whole duty by us. I can almost forgive him, as I reflect upon it.

He had not struck me for nearly two years, and treated me in every respect as if he realized that I was something more than a child in my feelings; and now—on my nineteenth birthday—when all the fiery passions of a man surged through my blood, I could not bear it. I do not think he would have struck me had he not been extra cross, very tired, provoked at seeing the "everlasting book" in my hand, and, withal, having the ox-gad ready, so temptingly, in his hand. I must have turned very white, and have looked dangerous, before I lowered my arm, for a voice shrieked:

"Don't, Ben, don't!"

I turned, and there, near the well-curb, to which they were coming for some cool water, stood my sister Emmeline, next younger than myself, and her friend, Annie Anderson. The paleness of my face was instantly succeeded by a blush—the most tingling, burning blush that ever blazed in it; for Annie, of all the world, was the one person from whom I would have concealed my mortification. That she should have witnessed the blow, and my ignominious tumble to the ground, crushed me instantly out of all self-respect and hope. I hung my head, and walked away, I cared not whither, but presently found myself in a shady covert of bushes beside the brook across the ten-acre lot. Here I flung myself upon the ground, and, with my face buried in the grass, felt for a few moments as if I should suffocate. Then I raised myself, and dipping the cool brook-water in my hand, dashed it over my hot head. I struggled for breath; but, finally, the great lump in my throat broke up in a sob, and I sat up, utterly miserable. I had been so happy, for me, on that morning, thinking how fast I was nearing manhood; that in two years more I could shake off the galling fetter of parental injustice; could choose for myself my own path; could—oh, tremulous thought of hidden bliss!—ask Annie Anderson to go the same way.

But now, I had been degraded before her; perhaps—indeed, almost certainly—she had laughed at me! Annie was a merry witch, full of frolic as an egg is full of meat, and was it probable that she had witnessed my sudden fall—as it were, from Asia to America—my tumble out of cloud-land, without appreciating how very ridiculous it was?

Go back, reader, to the time when you were at the sensitive age of adolescence, and sympathetic with my humiliation. And, oh, keenest, bitterest pang! she had seen me treated as a naughty boy, when all my aspirations for months had been to appear in her eyes as manly as those older young fellows who dared to ask to see her home from singing-school, and to take her riding in their new buggies. Oh, misery!

I sat there a long time. I heard the horn blow to summon the family to supper, but I did not stir. Just as the last segment of the sun's golden circle sunk below the horizon, the mountain of my unhappiness lifted suddenly; I passed from the depths of wretchedness to a state of exhilaration that was almost joy. The solution of the problem of my destiny flooded over me—

in one instant my resolution was taken—I would run away!

That moment I felt free; the sting of the ox-gad left my shoulders. Where I would go, or what I would do, were unsettled questions—it was enough that I had broken the chain constantly binding and galling me; my father should never strike me again—I would no more be tied to the tail of a plow and bent beneath all manner of heavy burdens, receiving for my reward only such food and clothing as a parsimonious parent thought absolutely necessary. I was not much excited; at least, my heart did not beat faster than common; but, the heavens seemed to expand and the earth to widen. Instead of being one man's drudge, I felt myself to be master of "the situation." There seemed to be nothing I could wish but what I might attain. It was astonishing I had never thought of it before—how easy and proper it was that I should run away.

Already I saw myself one of the throng walking along the pavements of New York, that great city, only forty miles from me, which I had never entered; already I snuffed the sea-breeze, and went bounding over the sparkling brine of the ocean. Not that I had resolved upon a sailor's life, or settled upon any plan—I only felt that I was free—that—

"The world was all before me where to choose."

How long I would have sat there by the little brook I do not know; I heard my mother, calling from the still between the orchard and meadow, and I arose and followed the call.

"I've kept some supper warm for you, Ben," she said, as I came up; "it's on the kitchen table. You'll have some, won't you?"

"Yes, mother," I said, cheerfully; and, going in, I made a hearty meal, very much to her satisfaction, for I could tell, by the way she hovered about the room, watching me, that she felt anxious to make up, by her attentions, for the harshness of another. God bless that dear mother! Once, when she came up to the table to place before me an apple-pie, I saw that she had been weeping. Emmeline had doubtless told her of father's conduct, and her maternal heart had bled for the fond boy whose nature she understood so much better than the stern father would or could. For an instant I wavered in my secret resolution, as I saw the traces of those tears; but, I believed that mother would justify me—and some time I would come back to her, a son for her to be proud of.

I went to my room quite early that evening. Of course I had not the luxury of a room to myself; two of my young brothers slept in a double-bed, at one side of the low window; my single cot was opposite. The boys slept soundly even at that early hour. I was not afraid of their observation, as I took an old carpet-bag, which hung from a peg on the wall, and placed in it the few effects which I considered necessary. A Bible, with a book-mark in it which Annie had worked for me the previous Christmas; a little box containing such relics as were most precious to me; two clean shirts; as many pairs of stockings; two handkerchiefs; the daguerreotypes of mother and Emma—these were my possessions. I then changed my clothes, putting on my Sunday suit, which, though not in the latest fashion, was sufficiently respectable, my father always expecting us to attend church on the Sabbath, as religiously as he expected us to work sixteen hours per day on the six other days. To this I added the silver watch which hung above the little deal table, and which was incontestably mine, having been presented to me by the favorite uncle, Benjamin, after whom I was named. It was a good watch, and I reflected that if I should get "strapped" it would readily sell for twenty-two dollars. Lastly, I counted the money in the ragged wallet, which had descended to me when it became too worn for father's use; I counted it, although I knew, to a penny, its contents: a five-dollar gold-piece, which I had earned cutting hay for a neighbor; a dollar bill father had graciously given me for finding a valuable steer which had got lost in the swamp; a quarter, and three dimes. Not a large capital to set up in the world with; but, as it was all I had, I would make it do. I knew that father had three hundred dollars, in silver and gold, in the desk in his sleeping-room, and, for a moment, I debated whether I had not a right to some portion of it, since it had been gained as much by my labor as his; but pride and honor both resisted the thought of its appropriation. Well, there was nothing more to be done, except to wait until such a time of night as should insure my escape unobserved; so I laid down on my bed, and tried to take a little rest, in view of the fatigue I should have to un-

dergo; but I only succeeded in thinking, hard and fast, of Annie Anderson, and how she would take my going away.

At last I started from a light doze, to find, upon looking at my watch by moonlight, that it was nearly two o'clock. Time to be going! I turned and looked at my peacefully sleeping brothers. I thought of Emma in the chamber adjoining, and came near slipping in there to make her the confidant of my resolves; she had been a good sister, and was fond of me; but, there seemed more security in keeping my plans to myself. How to get out of the house was the next question. Father slept so soundly, that I might have gone out in squeaking boots without disturbing him; but mother was a light sleeper, and I feared to run the gantlet of the lower rooms. It was only about twelve feet to the ground, and the bough of an apple-tree reached to the window; I leaned out and dropped the carpet-bag, then grasped the bough, swung off, and let myself drop. Soon I was in the road. Watch, the dear old dog, followed me to the gate, but I bade him be silent and stay back, and he obeyed. Out into the moonlit road! How silent the world was; how black the shadow of the fence along the little side-path! At first I walked rapidly, looking back to see if I was followed. Gradually my pace slackened as I approached the first dwelling along the track I had taken; I stopped before the gate and looked long at the house. Annie lived there. The moon poured its full radiance over the old brown front, silencing the glass in her window, and showing me the few roses yet in bloom on the vine which climbed to the gable. For many minutes, great as was my haste, I could not move on. I almost believed that she would rise and come to the window; that I should once more see her sweet face, with the curls glimmering about it—but it did not come. If Annie had not seen the blow, even then I should have turned back; but, as it was, she should see and know that I had the spirit to resent insult, even when a father was the insulter.

A chanticleer, crowing the hour of three, startled me out of my dream; with a sigh I trudged onward, leaving a part of my heart behind me. The worst was over, now that I had passed Annie's home. Soon the red light of dawn began to mix with the silver moonlight. Never will I forget the delicious smell of a field of clover by which I walked just as the morning began to brighten in the east. Often and often, mingled with the sharp odor of the salt water, or in the close air of the sick room, on the tops of the mountains, in the midst of nameless and delightful islands, mingled with the hot breath of the tropics, or stealing along the chill breezes of the northland, comes back to me that scent of clover, wet with dew, blushing in the summer dawn. And always with it comes a memory of Annie, as I left her then, a fair, innocent girl of "sweet sixteen." I have been a wanderer—have fulfilled all the promises of an eager and roving disposition—have touched the shores of many lands; but, the sweetest perfume for me is the honeyed breath of clover, and of all the maidens who have shown me friendship during my adventurous life, there never has been, there never will be, another so incomparable, as

"The girl I left behind me."

CHAPTER II.

IN THE CITY.

WELL, I trudged on for several hours after the sun arose, until, tired and warm, I stopped in front of a pleasant-looking farm-house, set well back in a shady yard, and gazed longingly at the tall well-pole, which held on high a moss-covered bucket. I had taken the road which I knew, by tradition, led on to the city, it being my purpose to go straight there. "I will get a drink of water," I said; and, entering the gate I had soon lifted the dripping bucket, sparkling with its cool ripples, to my lips. As I finished drinking, I saw a motherly woman, under an apple-tree, busy with her week's washing. All at once I realized that I was hungry. She looked at me with the curiosity characteristic of country people. I took off my straw hat, and asked for a piece of bread, telling her at the same time, that I was "footing it" to New York, and had had no breakfast. She went in the house and came out with a plateful of bread and butter, a turn-over blackberry pie, and a bowl of milk. When we first begin what we feel is a crisis of our life, how tenaciously the most trifling occurrences cling to our memory! I remember that breakfast much better than I do what I had for dinner to-day. I sat on the cool stone by the

well-curb, ate, and rose up refreshed. The matron, with whom I had some friendly chat as I was eating, would not take the silver quarter which I offered her. She knew I was a country boy, and was pleased to do me a kindness. I saw that she had her clothes ready to rinse; so, as she would take no other remuneration, I insisted on drawing the "rinsing water" for her.

After this, I proceeded on in good spirits until the hot afternoon and the wakeful night I had passed suggested the feasibility of rest. Climbing a fence, I chose a snug corner, and with my carpet-bag for a pillow, got a "two-hours" sleep. I was almost disappointed, when night came, that I had met with no startling adventure thus far on my travels. A well-traveled road, leading directly toward the metropolis, and lined with peaceful farms, was not the field to choose for novel experiences; neither were those the days of Robin Hood, nor even of scalping Indians; a ride of a few miles in a farmer's wagon, and a passing nod from those I met, summed up my history for that day.

The experience of the second day was the same. Just at dusk I reached the city, and went wandering through its gas-lit suburbs, unknowing where to apply for a night's lodging, when a policeman, doubtless reading and pitying my verdancy, took me in charge, kindly guiding me to a modest boarding-house kept by his own wife, where I was neither, for a wonder, robbed or cheated. After an early breakfast I started the next morning to "see the sights." That was a golden day. As I went staring into the jewelers' shops, the print shops, the book-stores, with my ears deafened by the roar and tumult around me, I thanked my stars a thousand times for the lucky "last straw which had broken the camel's back," and caused me to leave the tame life of a hard-worked country-boy. I pursued my investigations straight down to the water's edge, and had got back as far as Taylor's saloon, when the sight of its tempting windows reminded me that it was after one o'clock. I went in, feeling awfully bashful; and after I got in I would have given ten dollars (did I have it) to be out again. However, there was nothing to be done but to go ahead. A waiter held back a chair for me at a vacant table, or I do not know as I should have known enough to sit down. And now—what should I have? To gain time, I picked up a thin book which lay on the table and opened it, pretending to read. My eyes swam so that I did not see what it was; I thought it was poetry, as it was in double columns, and looked like it. But, as my confusion cleared away I saw that it was that mysterious thing I had read of—a bill of fare. The prices were marked, and everything was so frightfully high that I finally contented myself with a plate of cake and a saucer of ice-cream—the cheapest thing there. As I put the first spoonful of cream in my mouth I dodged back as if it had burnt me, it was so cold. Then I blushed, and looked up to see who was laughing at me. Just opposite me sat two beautiful young ladies, perfect angels, their faces dimpling with mirth, who dropped their eyes instantly lest I should see that they had taken notice of me. I was too proud to be laughed at, and I grew cool in a moment; so that, when they looked up again, my glance was quite as steady as theirs. The youngest was *very* pretty. She reminded me of Annie, who would have looked full as handsome, tricked out in the same exquisite clothes. They arose to go out, pretty soon, and this younger one dropped her handkerchief as she left her chair. She did not notice her loss until I picked it up and returned it to her. She gave me a very sweet smile out of her dark hazel eyes, as she said, "Thank you." As for me, I was a little startled, but not by her smile. As I gave her the handkerchief, I saw her name upon it, and it then flashed over me that she was my own city cousin. "Minnie Gardiner" was the name. My mother's maiden name was Gardiner. She had a brother in New York, a rich importer. There had been no intercourse between the families since I was a mere child, my mother jealously fancying that, as her brother grew wealthy he grew indifferent to her. She did not like his wife, either, who was "proud," but not so proud as mother, after all, who was a Gardiner, and thought it her duty to be too proud to visit her rich relations. In coming to the city I had not thought of this uncle—certainly, not to make any advances to him. I intended to steer clear of his "patronage."

I recollected, now that I saw them before me, that he had two daughters—I had seen them once when little girls, they had paid us a sum-

mer visit—who must be about the age of these. For a moment I felt like saying:

"How do you do, Minnie and Adelaide?" It would be such excellent fun to shock them there, in that fashionable throng, by announcing myself as their "country cousin." I restrained the impulse; but as they swept by me so gracefully, I could not help wishing that I was fitted to claim their friendship, they were really such beautiful girls.

"I will be fit," I secretly resolved; "nature has not denied me some talent and some good looks. Wait until I have had an opportunity!"

The girls stepped into their carriage near the door, and I saw them disappear, not expecting to behold them again very soon—but fate willed otherwise. How I happened to meet them the second time, will shortly appear.

I spent two hours in a book-store, paid six shillings for a copy of somebody's "Travels," and went home to the policeman's to dine at the hour set. That evening—after first asking my new friend's advice, and finding that he did not think it very wicked to go to the theater—I went to Burton's and saw Burton himself play "Toodles."

As I walked down, at eleven, with the policeman, I confided to him my new resolution of becoming an actor! This plan he was so judicious as to discourage with all his might. The next day, finding my funds giving out with amazing rapidity, I foresaw that I must cut my holiday short. My friend advised me to advertise in the *Herald*, and the result of my deliberations was a "want," among many in the next morning's issue, which read in this wise:

"SITUATION WANTED. By a young man, aged 19, from the country. Has a fair education, and is ambitious.—Would prefer a place in some wholesale mercantile house where industry and honesty would insure promotion. Address B. P., care of O'Gorham, Union Square Post-Office."

CHAPTER III.

RICH RELATIONS.

I NEVER thought I was one of those who are "born to be lucky"—nevertheless, I have occasionally had some marvelous streaks of good fortune. Not knowing the rarity of good results to fifty cents' worth of advertising, I was not half so much surprised as was my official friend at finding, on the following day, a note in the post-office requesting B. P. to call at three, that afternoon, at No. blank on Fulton street.

"It's bad, your not having references," said O'Gorham, when he had inquired about them and found that I had none.

"I shall just tell a straight story, and if they don't believe it, they can write to my mother and see. Besides, I have a rich uncle in New York; but, I hate to ask favors of him. Nor will I; I'll trust to my face, O'Gorham; don't you think it is an honest one?"

"It is, indeed, or you wouldn't have come it over me as you did. When I saw you, I knew just what you was, or I shouldn't have taken you in."

I ran my hands through my thick brown curls and thought the good policeman did not know *all* that I was; he little recked of my tastes and my ambition; but, he was a good friend to me, and I liked him.

"Be punctual to the minute," he said, as we parted, referring to the appointment at three.

No danger that I shall not be. I was so excited by the prospect that I could not enjoy my sight-seeing, growing more and more nervous as the hour drew near. I walked down and up Fulton street long before the time, selecting the number, and writing down the name of the firm—Ketchum & Co.

The city-hall clock struck three, and I pushed open the heavy door of No. blank and stood inside. Immediately I felt like one in an enchanted land. Delicious odors, redolent of foreign lands, calling up visions of the orient, floated about me. The secret of the magic I soon discovered; I was in a large importing house of tea, coffee and spices. I looked, almost with awe, and certainly with delight, upon the foreign appearing sacks and boxes, inscribed with cabalistic lettering.

At once I took a fancy to the place. It was the next best thing to traveling—this living in the midst of packages fresh from their long journey across the sea, bringing with them perfumes of the East. I should hardly have been surprised if Sindbad had walked in with his piece of meat stuck full of diamonds. I had but a moment to indulge my fancy. A quiet-looking clerk asked me my business; I showed him the note I had received from the

firm, and was ushered into a little room, in the center of which stood a table with several old-fashioned *real* China tea-cups and saucers, and a small kettle over an alcohol lamp. I had to wind my way through alleys of piled-up chests, giving forth delicate aromas as I passed, until I reached the room; and in it—as if even this private office and "tea-room" must be intruded upon by the immense stock—stood yet a few more packages. My cicerone left me at the door, and I found myself alone with a gentleman, rather over the middle-age, with iron-gray locks, penetrating eyes and a handsome face, who was sitting at a desk, and had just restored his watch to its pocket. He looked at me as if inquiring my business. My heart began to sink, but I walked boldly forward and handed him his letter, as the quickest way of announcing myself.

"What is your name?"

"Benjamin Perry."

He gave me a keen glance, as I made this answer.

"From what part of the country?"

"Westchester county."

"Hum! indeed! What do you propose to do?"

His question was straight to the point, but I did not know how to answer it. When at home, I thought I knew a good deal because I was something of a Latin scholar, a handsome penman, and quicker at figures than any of my acquaintance—"quite a mathematical genius," my teacher had averred. But, the question was: what did I propose to do in this tea and coffee house? My utter ignorance of city methods of doing business broke over me in a new light. For three minutes the gentleman awaited my answer, his eyes fixed on my face all the time. In my impulsive way I resolved to explain myself and throw myself upon his generosity to give me a trial.

"I do not know," I said, answering his eyes by as firm a look. "I have worked on a farm all my life, but I am good at accounts, and am esteemed an excellent penman. I am willing to work hard, on a small salary, at anything which will give me a chance to improve, to rise in life, or to see the world."

"Let me look at your references."

"I have none, sir. The fact is, I—ran away from home," I stammered, getting confused under that searching look.

"A bad beginning. What did you run away for?"

"Because I wanted to see men and things, and I hated the farm; and because I was treated like a slave by my own father, sir. Wouldn't you run away if you were nineteen, and your father should *strike* you because you read a book on your birthday, and forgot to mend a stone-fence in the broiling afternoon sun?"

"I don't know but I should," he replied, with an amused air. "I had no idea," he continued, smiling, "that Isaac Perry was so hard on his oldest boy."

I stared at him in astonishment; he held out his hand to me.

"So you've quite forgotten your uncle Gardiner, have you, who used to come occasionally to see you, when you were a little chap?"

I shook hands with him, but not heartily; he was too rich, and I was afraid that he would want me to sink some of my independence before him. I did not know whether to be glad or sorry at the chance which brought us together. He made me take a chair, and tell him all about the family—especially mother and Emmeline, which interest in them made me like him better.

"How does it happen that you came to the city, without friends or acquaintances, yet stay away from me and my house?" he queried, after a while.

"Well, uncle, you are *too rich*," I answered, frankly. "After I had carved out my own fortune, I intended to seek you, on equal terms."

"Equal fiddlesticks. I never thought that Margaret's boy would hold aloof from her own brother. Margaret's getting foolish, I believe. Well, well, you *shall* be as independent as you like. Perhaps you wouldn't accept a situation now, if I had one to offer, since you find out I'm a rich uncle?"—and he smiled.

"I'd like the situation, very much, on the same terms as you would give to a total stranger."

"I do not think I should give the place to a stranger—a run-away—without recommendations, or the least knowledge of business," he said, with a laugh which made my ears burn. "But I know you're smart, if you're Margaret's boy, and honest, if you're Isaac

Perry's. I like your spirit, and I fancy you will be a rapid worker. Under such circumstances, I'll try you and instruct my clerks to give you all necessary information. You'll have accounts to keep, and other similar work to do, and you'll have, occasionally, perhaps, to handle packages. In time, if you are faithful, you will stand a chance of promotion—notwithstanding you're a nephew of one of the firm! And now, would you be doing me too much of a favor to go home with me to dine and spend the evening?"

The half humorous, half sarcastic gleam again laughed in those keen eyes, but I strove not to betray the embarrassment it caused me. I thought of the young ladies, my cousins, whom I had met in the saloon, and the expectation of being introduced to them still further disconcerted me: yet I had to come to New York to "see the world," and I would be a coward to succumb to bashfulness. So I smiled back at my polished uncle, and said:

"If you consider it a favor, I shall be happy to oblige you."

At that moment a man came to the door, whom I took to be an officer, but soon discovered was a servant in livery. He seemed to quite look down on me, in my plain clothes, but uncle spoke to me in a manner which taught the fellow that it was his business to respect the nephew of his master.

"The carriage is here to take us home, Benjamin. My girls will be surprised to find they have a cousin. I've often heard them wish for one. They have no brother, and they think 'a cousin' would be a fine thing—to beaun them about when papa is too busy."

"But not a country cousin," I remarked, taking the seat opposite him in the velvet-lined carriage.

"Pooh—pooh! we'll rub the country all off in a few months," was the good-natured reply.

"I wonder what O'Gorman would think of this?" I reflected, as the horses pranced proudly along the thoroughfare. "He would think I was 'in luck,' sure enough."

Hardly was the idea in my mind, before we turned off around Union Square, passing within three feet of that wondering policeman, who stared at me blankly until I bowed and smiled.

"How! how!" said my uncle, sharply, "who's that?"

"It's the policeman who took charge of me, uncle, when he saw how much I needed his services. I boarded with him for the present; he's a real friend, too."

"All right! I was afraid you had been making very improper acquaintances. Must be very careful who you associate with, young man, when you first start out in life. A great deal depends on the company you keep."

"I know I ought to be very particular about my company, uncle," I answered, gravely. "Perhaps I ought to have asked you for your references, before I accepted your invitation to dinner?"

"Saucy and vain, as well as adventurous," he said, slowly, piercing me with those bright eyes. "I'm afraid you're too fast for us old fogies."

"Don't think me vain nor—impudent, uncle. Indeed, I do not think I am. I just feel a little bitter because I've been treated so, and I've overstepped the bounds, I know—for which, I beg your pardon."

"You're a Gardiner—that's plain to be seen," was the reply.

In a short time we stopped before one of those brown-stone houses, with the lions on the steps, and the plate-glass windows, which I had so admired upon my entrance into the city. My heart was in my mouth as we went up the steps. I could have met the whole city council, the mayor included, with a much better grace than I could face the charming young ladies whose acquaintance I had already partially made. Uncle had told me, during the drive, that aunt Gardiner had been dead two years, and that his eldest daughter, Adelaide, was mistress of the house; so I had nothing worse to encounter than those bright, beautiful creatures, and yet my knees would get weak, and my mouth dry.

Another servant in livery answered the bell. We stepped into the hall, and the man took my straw hat. Uncle was pulling off his linen duster, when something dazzling floated down the wide stairway, and a pair of white arms went about his neck, to the tune of two or three little kisses.

"Softly, Minnie; don't strangle me, while I'm pinioned in this duster, and can't help myself."

Just then, the parlor door opened, and another lovely actor appeared upon the scene.

"My dear girls, this is your cousin Benjamin, from Westchester county. Don't complain any more for the want of a cousin—for here's the genuine article—my own sister Margaret's boy. Make him welcome, girls."

Adelaide came forward to give me her hand, but paused in the act; I met her gaze, and then Minnie's—both the witches burst out laughing, and I, very much relieved, but ridiculously shy, still, laughed a little, too.

"How! how! what's this?" said the uncle.

"Oh, papa, he picked up my handkerchief for me, in Taylor's saloon, only yesterday. And only to think that we never guessed he was our cousin!"

"But I knew you," said I, "for I read the name on your handkerchief."

"Then why didn't you make yourself known, sir?"—and amid much lively chatter, the girls drew me into the parlor. Adelaide was so lady-like and gentle, Minnie so arch and merry, it was impossible for me to realize my own awkwardness; even when placed at the table, in the majestic dining-room, half an hour later, I felt almost at home. My mother had learned me to eat like a gentleman; so that the dishes being silver instead of delf, did not make much difference.

After dinner, when the father went into the library to look at his papers and books, I found myself telling these lady cousins my whole little stupid history, and they seemed to take an interest, and to think I had done right; they were much pleased, too, to hear about Emmeline, and declared they would have her to visit them before three months.

"Of course, if you expect to be any thing," said Minnie, sagely, "you do just right to come to the city. It's the only place worth living in. Now, if you had a new suit of clothes, we'd take you to the opera to-night. There's a short summer season, and everybody goes. We have our tickets purchased."

"I know these clothes are not just the thing; but, they're the best I have, Miss Minnie, and I shall not have any more until I've earned the means to buy them."

"Oh, dear, is it possible! If I had to earn my clothes, I'm afraid I shouldn't have many. But, you've got a place with papa, now, cousin Ben, and I suppose you'll have all the money you want."

Dear little innocent thing! it made me thrill all through to have her call me cousin Ben, yet I know she would not have done it so freely, if she had not regarded me as a mere boy. She must have been just about Annie Anderson's age—that is, three years younger than I. Pretty soon she asked me how old I was.

"Only nineteen! Why, Ada, I thought him at least twenty-one, didn't you?"

Adelaide said she did, and I felt three inches taller—not taller, for I was a good height then—but manlier.

"I'm afraid I'm keeping you from the opera?" I said, presently.

"Oh, dear, no!—we have an hour yet. Besides, you are going to stay with us, for a few weeks, anyhow, until you have time to look up a nice boarding-place. Papa has no son, you know, and I really think he has taken a fancy to you. He just called me into the library, and told me to tell Bridget to prepare a room for you. You must amuse yourself with a book this evening, and you can retire when you get sleepy; and to-morrow (coaxingly,) you must have your hair cut, and a new coat, and then we'll let you beaun us about, you know."

My independence was fast vanishing, when I could allow this young lady to order me to the barber's and tailor's; but it was impossible to get offended with cousin Minnie, not even when she insinuated that she should be ashamed of me as I was. You see, she added, so prettily, that—"I would be so handsome, if I would only do justice to myself."

The upshot of these pretty cousins was, that I allowed my uncle to order me a suit of clothes, and that I remained several weeks in his family, improving fast under the polishing process to which I was subjected. When I went to pay my bill to O'Gorman, and to get my carpet-bag, he congratulated me warmly on my prospects. I always bowed to him from my uncle's carriage, and spoke to him when I passed on foot. I never forgot him, and two years later he again came to the rescue, when I was in worse difficulty than at our first meeting.

In the mean time I wrote a long letter to my sister Emmeline, relating my experience, sending much love to mother, and desiring her, in a postscript, to remember me

to Annie A. I did not mention father's name. My sister answered the letter, telling me that mother had felt very bad at my running away, but now that she knew that I was under uncle Gardiner's care, she was much happier than before, and did not know but I had done well in going off, since it was not in me to be contented on a farm. Also (in a postscript), that Annie A. sent her kind regards.

All this while, do not think, dear reader, that I was growing to a dandy and a pensioner on my rich relations. I kept a strict account of what was expended for me, resolving to return every penny; and at the store I worked with such a will, that I quickly mastered the business before me, and was so willing, quick, and industrious, that I soon made my services desirable.

But, after all, the life of a clerk did not satisfy me. I read all the volumes of travel and adventure in the Gardiner library, and grew daily more restless amid the coffee-bags and tea-chests. The cinnamon groves of Ceylon, and the nutmeg-trees of Banda were constantly suggested to me. Born to be a rover, I fed my fancies on spices, and stimulated my tastes on the rarest, most delicate Souchong, Oolong, and Flowers of Heaven.

One day, the firm of Ketchum & Co., had a ship come into port. I went down to see to the bill of lading. I envied the roughest sailors, whose jackets were spattered with brine from far-off sparkling seas. Every rope and timber breathed romance to me. Knowing nothing about a vessel except what I had learned by reading sea-tales, I longed to be versed in nautical lore. Oh, to lie on the deck of a ship, and watch the deep blue sky, while the vessel fled before a chasing breeze. Oh, to climb the rigging, and look afar over the sparkling brine. Oh, to visit mysterious islands—and to see the flags of other nations flying as we entered their ports!

CHAPTER IV.

OFF TO ORIENT—A CEYLON HOUSE AND CEYLON LIFE.

THE vessel, as soon as it was refitted, was to sail again on a long voyage to the Orient. She was to touch at Ceylon, Java, and the Spice Islands, tarrying at each to take in her precious and odorous freight, finally, to bring up at Hong Kong, and make up her cargo with tea. I was determined to sail with the Adelaide—the ship was named after my eldest cousin—even if I had again to run away. Yet, I wanted my uncle's consent and approbation, with some ostensible business which should not merely make me an adventurer. After weeks of fever and fidgeting, when the vessel was within six days of her departure, I broke the subject to him. At first, he was much surprised, and said he did not think my mother would wish me to go; but, at length, seeing how strongly my mind was bent on the voyage, he told me that the partner of the house, who resided in Hong Kong, had desired them to send out another clerk by the return ship.

"If you go," said he, "you will have to stay at least five years, home-sick or not. No more running off when you get there! You are very young to be trusted with the place, but I think you will make just such an assistant as he desires, provided you are steady and contented. If I could trust you to stay, I should believe it a good place for you. The salary is excellent, the promotion rapid, and, as you grow older, you may speculate independently of the firm. But, it will be very vexatious, if you disappoint us by throwing up the place in a few months."

"I shall do nothing dishonorable, uncle Gardiner. If I take the place, I will stay as long as I agree to."

"Five years is the least that would make it worth while."

I went to my room to think the matter over, and decide. Five years seemed a long time to me, when I thought of Annie. Yet, I should be only twenty-four at the end of them—just a proper, marriageable age! I believed that Annie would wait for me; at least I would ask her. As for getting tired of Hong Kong, I decided that I could live among the Celestials some time without getting tired of them. I wanted to see their umbrellas, their pig-tails, and the curious little dwarfed feet of their women. My mind was made up to accept the offer in less than fifteen minutes. Then I sat down and wrote a letter to Annie. A week before, I could not have done it—but the thought of the great distance so soon to roll between us, gave me courage. I told her that I supposed she considered me a boy; but that I should not stay one always. I was going away to China to make my fortune—I should be gone five years—and if she thought

she could wait that long for me, I should lay everything in the world I possessed at her feet, the hour of my return.

As Mr. Anderson's people only went to the post-office on Saturdays, and the Adelaide sailed on Monday, I knew I could not receive an answer before then; so I asked her to be sure and write to me at Hong Kong her "yes or no" to my proposition. Before I sealed my letter, I bought a gold ring and inclosed it, mailed the missive, and the deed was done! I delayed writing to mother until Sunday, fearing that if my intentions were discovered in time, father would come after me, and, as I was in my minority, he could compel my return; when I did write, it was in the gayest, most hopeful style, for I knew she would feel very sad at the step I was taking. I promised her the richest brocade silk, and the heaviest crape shawl that I could find in the Celestial empire, and a white-silk wedding-dress for Emma.

Then followed five busy days. My cousins were so kind as to attend to my wardrobe, and to providing me with dozens of little comforts which else I should have done without. I had much to do, learning what would be expected of me in my new situation, and taking all the directions, inquiries, etc., which the firm, on this side of the world, had to send to the other half.

At last came Sabbath evening—that sacred time, so replete with home associations. I was really melancholy, for the first time, and wandering off into the library, after tea, I began pacing up and down, when I espied Minnie in the window, sewing something.

"Why, you little heathen, do you sew on Sunday?" I cried, pretending to be gay, and approaching her.

"It's only a pin-holder for you, cousin," she answered, reproachfully. "You'll need it very much, on the water, and I hadn't time to finish it yesterday. I don't suppose there's a pin in China," she continued, "they're real barbarians there—I don't see what you want to go for"—and with that, her voice, which had been trembling more and more, broke down into a little muffled sob.

Goodness, gracious! how I felt. The blood went tingling down into my toes, and the tears rushed into my own eyes. I had never had the least idea that that delicate, high-bred, bewitching little beauty regarded me with any particular affection—at least, with any sentiments—not strictly cousinly. For a moment my head whirled, and I forgot all about the gold ring marked "B. to A." I tried to remove the little hand which she had placed before her eyes, but she would not allow it; I saw the tears break out beneath her fingers, and, quite overcome, I bent and kissed the forehead and the hand; but she started up pettishly, wiped her eyes, and declared she was crying just to think how bad my sister Emmeline would feel when she heard of my going away!

"And don't you feel bad, too?" I said, rather sheepishly.

"No!" she said, earnestly, "why should I? You're only my cousin!"

"I wish you wasn't my cousin," I began, and then I thought of Annie, and stopped short.

"So do I, since you're going to run off and leave us without a beau this winter. I shall have to get a substitute," she added, laughing—and with that she ran off into the parlor, and began to sing, as she stuck a row of pins around the holder, just as if she hadn't been crying the moment before. I never did understand women, and I never expect to. When I came to say good-by the next morning, Minnie was nowhere to be found; she had hidden herself in some of the upper rooms. Adelaide gave me a piece of sisterly advice as to my conduct through life, kissed my cheek, and wished me "God-speed." I vowed in my soul, as the tears started beneath her gentle words, always to keep pure and true, and worthy of the respect of such women as Adelaide.

My uncle himself went down in the carriage with me to the dock; the ship had dropped out into the river the previous day; I could descry the bustle of preparation on board, and hear the shouts of command as the officer of the deck prepared to weigh anchor. Captain Jones and another of the officers were still on shore; the only other passenger was waiting in the small boat; up came the captain and mate, I wrung my uncle's hand, jumped into the boat with the others, the sailors dipped their oars and we shot off to the vessel.

Two hours thereafter we were creeping out of the lovely bay of New York, before a light autumn breeze, which just kissed its blue wa-

ters into little wreaths of snow. Like a white ghost glided the ship silently past the forts, through the Narrows, out—out into the illimitable ocean. The setting sun plunged into his nightly bath; a pink flush dyed the waters; now I turned an eager glance forward—anon a regretful look to the fast-fading heights of Staten Island. In a low voice I hummed:

"Shades of evening round us hover,
Isle of Beauty, fare thee well."

I experienced a sudden interruption to my song; something was the matter with me; I felt strange—then queer; the truth forced itself upon me—I was sea-sick. I will not trouble anybody with the history of the next three days; on the fourth, the steward helped me up on deck, and I was "myself again"—myself, only renewed, relined, and refitted—good as a brand new article. My senses never seemed so keen to enjoy; even to breathe that salt sea air was a luxury. Oh, the glorious idleness of the next few weeks! nothing to do but to bother the sailors with questions (which they seemed pleased to have me ask), and to watch the ever-changing face of the sea and sky. Talk about the monotony of ocean life! as the sailors say, it is only the lubberly land that is always the same. Every billow is a study, every cloud, every ripple of air; a thousand hues upon the water, from inky blackness, to purple, violet, green, blue, dull white; a thousand changes in the heavens; while the study of the winds alone might keep one busy.

I made myself a favorite with the ship's crew by the interest I took in their profession; they declared I ought to be master of a vessel; and, while they laughed at my ignorance, they strove which should teach me most. I liked nothing better than to listen to their yarns, which they were always ready, when off of duty, to spin for my benefit. One solemn old tar, in particular, told me more stories about sharks than would fill a volume; his fancy seemed so impregnated with those horrible creatures, that it was always giving birth to whole shoals of the most exaggerated species. Poor old Billy! he certainly must have carried about with him an impression of his final fate. Doomed to die at the hands, or rather the teeth, of the monsters he so detested, his own destiny was certainly floating about in the sea of his imagination, taking now this, and now that, grotesque, and frightful shape. He, so to speak, lived over his own death, a thousand times, in tales of the catastrophes which had occurred to others. Many a time he made my blood run cold, and my nerves quiver with his shark stories.

One day—we were lying off Ceylon, unable to make the island, on account of a dead calm—some of the sailors proposed to vary the tedium of our long voyage by a salt-water bath. The warm waters of that Indian ocean did indeed look tempting, purpling in the light of the declining sun. Not a ripple stirred the surface. We could look down, down, into their lucid depths. I leaned over the gunwhale dreaming of the "pearls under Oman's green waters," of mermaids and coral groves; Billy touched me on the shoulder and asked me if I did not want "a swim." I blushed to acknowledge my inability. I had sometimes sported in the mill-pond near my father's house, but I scarcely dared venture over the ship's side, much as I longed for the fun.

"It's a pity such a likely chap should be such a land-lubber," said the old tar, as I declined the invitation; and, indeed, I felt quite cheap under the veteran's evident compassion.

Some seven or eight of the crew stripped and went over into the sea. I watched them as they sported about in the soft and gentle element, wishing heartily that I dared to join them. Billy, the oldest of the number, was nevertheless the most expert, and his antics in the water excited my admiration. My eyes followed him as he struck out boldly some distance from his companions.

While I was silently wondering how far he intended to venture, he suddenly turned and put back. It seemed to me that he was making extraordinary exertions; he fairly flew through the water. The others did not notice him; but, as he came nearer, I was certain there was something wrong. All at once he gave a shriek, which rings in my ears yet; for a moment I saw his face, ghastly, convulsed with an expression of mortal terror—and then, old Billy disappeared forever. A commotion in the waters and streaks of blood upon the surface, told his fate. You never saw such a pale-faced set as came scrambling up the ship's fore rigging and tumbling over the bulwarks on the deck. They all escaped except the destined victim; while the

sharks quarreled over him, his comrades barely had time to secure their own safety. Alas, poor Billy! He was my friend, and I can not recall his tragic end without a tear dimming my eye. He had a serious air, and a gift of telling incredible stories, to which he added an art, which I have never, before or since, seen carried to such perfection—he had always an immense quid of tobacco in his cheek, and, in spinning his yarns, he made the quid more expressive than words. Now he would roll it in one cheek, now in the other, blow it out, squeeze it up—and when he brought up his story with a more than usually tough lie, we felt as if all the responsibility of the statement rested on the vile weed, which would then invariably expand in both cheeks at once, while he had to pucker up his withered lips to keep it in.

That night, delicious odors from the cinnamon gardens along the coast were wafted over the sea; the stars burned like small suns, and were of various colors. I remained long on deck, mourning for Billy, and drinking in the glorious beauty of a Tropic night. The next day, for the second time in over three months, I set foot on land. The other occasion had been on the barren island of St. Helena, and had been a welcome event; but now, earth never had seemed so ravishingly beautiful. I found the climate delicious—warm enough to inspire ardor of mind and feeling, but not by any means intolerably hot. The ship was to lay by for two weeks and take in freight consisting of cinnamon, pepper, coffee and tamarinds.

I have mentioned that I had a fellow-passenger. He was a young man, of English parentage, by the name of Emmons, whose father was interested in the ebony and ivory trade of Ceylon. This, then, was the end of the voyage with him. He was born on the island, but had been in England three years at school. Before returning to Ceylon, he had gone to America to establish an agency for his father. We had been good friends through the long weeks of the voyage, being both young, and keenly alert for all the enjoyment there was to be got out of life. His temperament was different from mine—he was more cool and prudent, and had much more worldly knowledge, being my senior by four years. I felt, before I touched shore, almost acquainted with Ceylon, he had told me so much of his boyhood's home. He had visited the pearl-fisheries on the other side of the island; had hunted, when a little fellow, along with the natives, in the beds of the streams, after a freshet, for precious stones, which were often washed down from the mountains; and he had once found a very large sapphire, worth many hundreds of dollars, which he had given to his little sister, Edith, and which his father had caused to be set in a handsome necklace of pearls and gold. He also told me how the natives hunted elephants in the dense and dangerous forests lying inland; and we agreed, if fortune favored us, during my short stay, to engage in such an expedition. He talked much of Edith, who, he said, was a little girl of twelve or thirteen, or thereabouts—a good little creature, who loved him dearly.

I was very much surprised and pleased when, just before we landed, young Emmons invited me to make his home my own during the fortnight of my visit. He urged it so heartily, saying he knew his father and mother would be glad to receive a friend who had added so much to his happiness through the voyage, that I could not resist my own inclination to accept.

"There's father," cried Charles—he had requested me to call him by his given name—as the small boat neared the dock, and before it touched, he had fairly leaped ashore and was in his parent's arms. Mr. Emmons, a tall, dignified looking person, received me gravely, but with kindness. I was not bold, and I think my modesty made a favorable impression. A "carriage," a queer-looking vehicle, with a native driver, awaited us; we got in, and were driven rapidly through a half-English, half-Dutch looking town, about two miles into the suburbs, where we stopped before a low, wide, eastern mansion, nearly hidden in a wilderness of flowers and trees, as strange to me as they were brilliant. In the distance I noticed a palm-tree, and felt that one of the dreams of my boyhood was realized.

But, while the charm of this foreign country was stealing over me, almost causing me to forget my companions, I heard Charles utter an exclamation, and beheld a lovely girl flying down the avenue, who cast herself upon his breast with the most impassioned words and caresses.

"My darling little Edith!" I heard the brother say.

This, then, was the *little* sister, of whom he had spoken, and of whom I had thought, as a child. So absorbed was she in the meeting that I doubt if she even knew of the presence of a stranger for several moments. During that time, my eyes were riveted upon her, and I did not hear the remarks which Mr. Emmons may have addressed to me. If the heavens had opened and let out an angel from its blooming courts I could scarcely have been more surprised. How can I describe Edith? I can not! You must not think that you have gathered the faintest idea of her grace, beauty, and enchanting artlessness, from any thing I may say about her. Picture a girl—woman of fourteen—an age, in that glowing tropic land, quite equal to seventeen in the colder clime—with soft, sky-blue eyes, an exquisite complexion, light-brown hair, glittering like gold in the light, and worn in its own natural curls, a slight but full figure, dimpled arms, pretty feet:—she had all these, yet her greatest charm was in her artless manner, and in the grace, peculiar, and all her own, of every movement and attitude. Never can I think of Ceylon, but I see her flying down the flowery vista, her white lawn dress fluttering through ranks of scarlet blossoms, and hear her silver-sweet voice crying her brother's name.

"But you must cease kissing me, long enough to welcome my friend," said Charles at last, laughing, and unclasping her white arms from about his neck. "Mr. Perry, this is my sister, Edith?"

She gave me her hand, greeting me almost affectionately; it was plain that anybody Charlie loved was a friend of hers immediately.

"You must not wonder that I am a little embarrassed," I said, feeling happy and at home all at once, "for your brother has been drawing your portrait for me, as that of a *little girl*."

"Well, I am a little girl—nothing else, am I, papa? But Charlie forgets that four years have given me time to grow in."

"I wouldn't have believed it," said Charles, looking with a sort of incredulous fondness at the sweet sister hanging to his hand.

So, laughing, well-pleased with each other, all excitement and joy, we came to the portico of the house, where stood the mother, waiting to welcome her long-absent son. Her happiness was more quiet than Edith's, but two large tears, which fell upon her cheeks, testified to her emotion.

It was a pleasant reunion—and I was not made to feel that I intruded upon its sacredness. A few words from her son gave Mrs. Emmons a history of our acquaintance, and rendered her welcome a motherly one. In two days I felt as much at home in that elegant house as though a member of the family. The exquisite courtesy with which I was treated is something beautiful to remember. It brought out all that was most refined in my own nature, and, few as had heretofore been my opportunities, I believe that I acted like a gentleman, because I *felt* like one.

"It seems to me you have lost that remarkably adventurous spirit which distinguished you on ship-board," remarked Charles to me, on the third morning. "You have but a fortnight to tarry in Ceylon, and you haven't said a word about an elephant-hunt since we landed."

I blushed, as I answered:

"The fact is, I have been so happy in this Paradise that I forgot all about the elephants, except when I saw them in the streets at work. Everything is so novel—even the dishes at table, the birds, the flowers, and your dear mother makes me home-sick for my own."

"How about my sister?" asked Charley archly.

"Oh, Miss Edith is a thousand times prettier than Emmeline. I admire her the most of any living creature I ever saw; but, you needn't be uneasy about admitting me to your Eden—my faith is pledged to one at home. You may allow me to admire your sister, without danger."

"She's only a child, anyhow, Ben—as much of a baby as the day she was two years old. She likes you very much, calls you her 'brother,' already. We shan't know how to spare you, when your time is up. But now, about the hunt: father does not wish us to venture; it's dangerous sport, you know, and he says we had better leave it to those who make it a business. But my heart is set on it, and I think we must try it about. In the mean time, you shall have the next best thing, an elephant-ride; and a pic-nic, too, in those woods which you see yonder."

He pointed to a distant forest, extending from the inland mountains, far down upon the plain. At its nearest point, it seemed at least twenty miles distant.

"Father has two elephants," he continued, "which he employs in loading boats, and other heavy work. He has said that we could have one of them for our expedition to-day. You shall have something to tell of when you get back to America. It is twenty-five miles to the grove in whose shade I propose we shall dine. You shall eat cocoa-nuts under their own trees; for a table-cloth we will have a leaf of the talipot tree, which is *only* thirty or forty feet in diameter. Edith is going with us. There is Polo and his driver, before the gate now. Come, Edith, Polo waits! Bring along the hamper, Candy," (this last to one of the dusky servants so plentiful about this oriental establishment.)

Edith came running out in a wide-brimmed straw-hat, to protect her from the sun. Her dress was a little different from the ordinary, the skirt being shorter, revealing the silken fullness of a pair of Turkish drawers gathered about her ankles. I thought she looked prettier than ever in this fanciful costume. Her mother followed her to the door, to caution us not to go any further into the forest than was customary, for fear of serpents or wild beasts. Charlie promised her that he would take us only to that civilized portion from which all wild creatures, except the birds, had long ago departed.

"We are only going to the cocoa-grove," he said; "we do not propose to venture into the forest proper. You know where the spring is, mother, where the three palms stand? Well, that is our limit; there we shall spread the gold luncheon you have ordered for us; there we shall stay until the great heat of the day is over, and from thence you may expect us, at about dusk this evening. Besides, mother, I am well armed; I have my short shot-gun, and my pistols, and I've given brother Ben a dangerous knife."

"What do you carry your gun for?" asked Mrs. Emmons.

"For birds. If we see any of those rice-birds which are nice when stuffed, I intend to bring home a dozen for breakfast."

Before the gate stood an immense elephant, fully twelve feet high. On his back was a sort of padded circular saddle, with seats for four. The animal was gayly decorated with trappings of scarlet cloth, with silver fringes.

"He is insulted if you don't dress him up when he goes forth for a holiday," exclaimed his *cornack*, or driver, to me. "Oh, he is wise, Polo is, and he likes Miss Edith next to me. She can do anything with him, almost. See him roll around his eyes at her!"

Edith gave the creature a sweet cake which she had brought in her hand for him, petted his extended trunk, and bade him kneel. He at once obeyed, and sunk on his knees, when without assistant, the gay-hearted girl sprang up his huge side, and into the saddle. Charlie and I followed; and the fourth seat was assigned to the weighty and important hamper, which was charged with the duty of keeping up the balance. The *cornack* then sprang onto the elephant's neck, spoke a word, and the mountain of flesh struggled to its feet. I felt as if seated on an earthquake—a ship in a storm was nothing to it.

Edith's silvery laughter rung far and wide at my expense. For the first few miles I had much difficulty in keeping my place, and once I plumped down on my knees before the fair girl opposite me, with such suddenness as to disconcert her. The next instant, her provoking laughter made the blood tingle in my ears.

"What do you laugh at?" I cried; "here I got down on my knees before you, to tell you how much I adore you, and you injure my feelings by your ill-timed merriment."

"If it's only your feelings that are injured," was the merry response, "you are fortunate; I was afraid your bones were broken."

"No," said I, "but my heart is."

Thus, with nonsense and mirth, we beguiled the time. The road wound through fragrant cinnamon-groves and coffee-plantations. Edith grew more charming every moment under the excitement of the ride and the fresh air; the color deepened in her cheeks; her eyes brightened, and a lovely animation made her almost too beautiful. I admired and loved her as if I were, indeed, the brother, which she sometimes called me; I never should have dared to aspire to awaken any more impassioned sentiment in her innocent breast; besides, I was still true to my vows to Annie, although not knowing whether she had received those vows with anger

or tenderness. Once, only, when dear Minnie wept in my presence, had my thoughts strayed for a moment—and then, surely, it was compassion, gratified vanity, or what not, besides love, that moved me. I never yet saw a good and beautiful woman that I did not immediately adore her; but the one sacred, household love—that I kept for Annie. Thus much in explanation.

As we got further into the country, away from the habitations, which were at first frequent, Edith sung for us, sweet English songs, in a voice still sweeter. She called on me for something American. I had a tolerable voice, and knew a little of music, having actually taught the country singing-school the previous winter; so I sung for her three or four of our sweetest negro melodies. She was charmed with them, and immediately began to learn the airs. Then I had to teach them to her; and all of us were surprised when the three palm-trees came in sight, which was the goal of our journey.

Half an hour later, we disembarked from our elephant. Polo was led away a short distance by his governor, who fastened him lightly, more for ceremony than need, to the trunk of a tree, whose branches afforded a grateful shade to the fleshy creature, at this nearly meridian hour. The servant busied himself cutting wild rice for Polo, while we looked about for a talipot-tree to get that very large leaf which Charlie had promised. We had to go quite a little distance into the grove to find one, and then it was enough for both of us youths to drag. We deposited it at Edith's feet, beside the spring, beneath the palms, where she forthwith began to cumber it with a tasteful, substantial luncheon. Never were cold chickens and sweet rice-cakes like those to which we now addressed ourselves; never was wine so delicious as that which we cooled in the spring. Our appetites and our spirits were like those of healthy children. Ah, little did we anticipate the terrible drama in which we should play a part that day! We thought of nothing but enjoyment; the world seemed made for us, so calm was the deep blue sky, so quiet and delightful that haunt beside the fountain.

We lingered long at the feast, and then we called *Aba*, the driver, to gather up the fragments for his own refreshment. It was yet too warm to think of returning; Charles was eager to spend a couple of hours in the grove, shooting birds, and wished me to accompany him, yet we were not willing to leave Edith alone, who would find it too fatiguing to keep with us.

"Don't remain on my account," she said, decidedly, "there is no danger of any kind here; and, if there were, Polo and *Aba* would defend me from it. I must have my noon siesta; and I will tell you where I will take it—in the saddle, on Polo's back. It will make a nice couch; and there I will be perfectly safe. Only don't forget yourselves, and wander into the forest too far; you might get lost; and you know there are plenty of wild animals, if you go far enough to find them."

"They are never seen in the grove," remarked Charlie. "A chattering monkey or two is the worst thing that ever I discovered here. Well, Edith, let's see you safe in the saddle, before we depart."

Polo was standing, and rather than trouble him to lay down, *Aba*, standing upon his coiled trunk, took Edith, as if she were a baby, and, with one little lift of the huge proboscis, swung her up into the seat.

"This is as nice as need be," said the maiden, curling down in the center of the saddle, and making a pillow of her shawl on one of the cushions. "I shall sleep just two hours, and when I awake, I want my brothers to be ready to start on the home journey."

How lovely she looked, her bright hair streaming over the scarlet cushions against which her soft cheek was pressed! I turned twice to stamp the picture on my heart—that gay, girlish creature, nestling to sleep, aloft from all creeping serpents or earth-damp, on the back of the majestic animal which upheld her couch. The faithful *cornack* added to the oriental character of the scene, as he reposed beneath the palms, his dark features and white turban brought into relief against the trunk of a tree.

We two young men sauntered quietly into the deep shadow of the thicker wood. As I had no gun, and was not a hunter, my attention was chiefly given to the new species of plants which I saw, and to the brilliant plumage of the noisy paroquets and cokatoots. But Charlie, who loved all kind of sporting, even to the shooting of fowls, grew animated in quest of

the dozen birds which he had promised for breakfast. Again and again the loud crack of his fowling-piece rung through the forest.

"Come, Charlie," I ventured, at length, looking at that very silver watch which I had once given as security to the policeman, "our two hours are more than half gone. Hadn't we better retrace our steps?"

"I've only seven birds, but I suppose I can get the remainder on our way back. I shouldn't like my sister to get frightened about us."

"Good heavens!" I exclaimed, a few moments later, "what's that?"

I pointed up to the topmost branch of a gigantic tree.

"It's only an ape," said Charlie, laughing.

"Of course it is," I said, joining in the laugh at my own expense. "At the first glance I thought it was a madman, periling his life."

"You ought to see a whole army of them, and hear them chatter at the sunset hour. They're hideous creatures, anyhow, and I don't like them," continued my friend. "Ben, I've half a mind to shoot that ape."

"Oh, don't," I said, shuddering, "it looks too much like a human being. I should feel like a murderer."

The wild creature, as if it understood us, gave a yell of defiance, and sprang nimbly out of sight, from one tree-top to another.

"What an immense fellow that was," commented Charlie—"the largest of the species I ever saw. I do believe it was a regular orang-outang; it must have come from the very interior of the forests."

A flock of birds here rose out of a marshy spot, and he fired upon it, forgetting all about the ape. After gathering up the trio which fell before the fire, he reloaded his gun, and we sauntered on, my friend ever on the alert for game.

"Come, Charlie, let us hasten our steps, for our two hours are up."

I know not what presentiment of evil came over me, but, suddenly, a shadow seemed to fall athwart the woods, and every thing to change; I felt impelled to run; but my friend laughed at my hurry.

"Edith ought to be flattered by your haste," he said.

At the very instant the words were spoken, a shriek rung out from the distance, that curdled the blood in our hearts.

"My God," cried her brother, "that was Edith!"

We ran as fast as possible, yet we seemed to stand still. Again, and the third time, we heard that cry of mortal terror and agony; we were not yet out of the thicker forest; we flew, though our feet were so much slower than our fears, that they seemed to cling to the earth; a moment more, and we came out in full view of the spot where we had left the rest of our party. At first, we only saw Edith standing up in the saddle, stretching out her arms as if for help. Then we beheld the cause of her alarm. An immense ape, fully five feet high—probably the very one which Charlie might have shot—stood on the lowest branch of the tree which overshadowed Polo; one of his hands, first passing around the limb, so as to steady its owner, had hold of the flowing sleeve of her dress, and with the other he was rapidly gesticulating, all the while chattering in what was doubtless intended to be the most amiable manner.

Totally unconscious of the character of the danger which threatened the young girl, I was inclined to burst out laughing at her excessive fright; Charlie, too, was provoked, half at her for the "scare" she had given us, and half at the audacious and disagreeable animal.

"We'll soon settle him," cried the young man, rushing forward, showing his gun, but not daring to fire at the ape, on account of his sister's proximity.

The brute saw us, and immediately changed his coaxing tactics.

"Oh, my God!" gasped Charlie, suddenly stopping short.

The ape had caught Edith about the waist, swung her off as if she was no more than one of its own young, and was now leaping from branch to branch with her, screaming defiance at us, until he reached the top of the lofty tree. There he held her firmly in one long, hairy arm, while he grinned down at us hideously. I gazed with the fascination of despair. Oh, awful minute of suspense! As I think of it now, the sweat breaks forth at every pore.

Polo, scenting mischief in the air, drew back and snapped the rope which bound him to the tree as if it had been a thread. Looking up he saw his beloved mistress, and blowing a terrific trumpet of rage, he rushed at the tree, coiled his trunk about it, and seemed about to snap it

off, in his fury. Charles gave another groan. But the sagacious animal took a second thought; even if able to break down the tree the fall would kill his mistress as well as her captor; reluctantly he unwound his grasp, and stood, stamping the ground, until it fairly shook.

Charlie raised his shot-gun to his shoulder. But to fire, even if his aim was steady enough to miss his sister and to hit the ape, would only cause the latter to drop his helpless burden to the earth, when she would surely be crushed to death by the fall.

Gazing up at the poor girl, white and silent in that loathsome embrace, and at the ferocious creature which grinned and mocked at us, as if confident of the victory in this unequal battle, my brain grew dizzy and my limbs numb. Then, as with his other hideous hand he began to pet and fondle his faint and shuddering victim, strength came to me, and I said to Charlie:

"I will go up in the tree."

"Then he will dash her to the earth," was the despairing answer.

"I can but try to save her," I whispered. "I will try to coax the creature with this sugar in my pocket."

Taking the long, sharp knife which my friend had given me before starting, firmly between my teeth, I threw off my coat and mounting the elephant's back easily reached the first branches. The ape looked down at me maliciously. His cunning eyes glittered and laughed; and when I was two-thirds of the way up, he held the girl out, and shook her, as if threatening me that he would throw her down if I came any nearer. I paused, and held out the lumps of sugar; then began again to ascend, reaching out the sugar, and speaking coaxingly. Still he held Edith out, and mumbled and grinned at me. I was within a few feet of them, and now I knew not how to proceed. How long was this eternity of torture to continue? Oh, if I could only beguile that wicked, artful fiend—put him a moment off his guard, until I, too, could grasp the girl, then I would fight it out with him. My knife should decide the contest. But he was evidently on the alert, growing every moment more excited, as the prospect increased that his prize was to be taken from him. Slowly, with extreme caution, I crept nearer. I thought, from the limp manner in which the young girl lay on the monster's arm, that she must have fainted. And now I stood almost face to face with my enemy, my feet firmly planted in a crotch of the tree, one hand clasping a limb, and holding the sugar invitingly, while with the other I strove to get hold, unobserved, of the floating garments which a light breeze waved toward me. Could I once get a firm hand upon these, the brute might loosen his grasp as soon as he pleased. But the wily creature was on his guard. Perceiving my effort, and that I was about to succeed, he sprang suddenly still higher, to the very topmost branch, which trembled and bent beneath his weight and that of his burden.

Again I crept forward, when, suddenly, as if afraid of my success, with an angry cry the enraged beast shook the delicate form which he held, and hurled it down through the air. A cry of horror arose from my lips; I was mad with the thought that this worthless, gibbering animal had murdered Edith; I climbed close to him, he threw out his long limbs to defend himself, wounding my face and breast, but despair and anguish gave me strength; he was on a limb so slender that he dared not move further out. I struck at him with my knife, cutting off one of his hands—the third blow pierced his heart, and he tumbled to the ground.

Descending, I looked about me with blinded eyes; it was some time before the haze cleared away, so that I could see Charles bending over his sister's form, where it lay on the earth. I dared not approach. The thought of the probable disfigurement of that lovely tenement which had lately held so bright a soul was too terrible for my courage. Suddenly Charlie jumped up and ran toward me; he threw up his arms like a madman, came close to me, then turned and ran toward Polo, who was standing near the form of his young mistress, laid his head against the side of the gentle animal, patted him, kissed him, and burst into tears.

"Poor Charlie," said I, drawing near, "are you going mad?"

"She lives—she lives!" cried he, hysterically, "and Polo saved her. God bless you, Polo!"—and with that he ran off frantically for the wine. Poor Aba, pale and trembling, brought water and threw it in the maiden's face; Charles poured wine between her lips; but it was not until she could sit up shuddering, and trying to faintly smile, that Charlie could tell me what

part Polo had performed in the salvation of his mistress. It appears that the elephant's attention was fixed upon all that occurred; anticipating, with human intelligence, the very catastrophe which took place, he kept himself directly under the young girl, where she hung suspended in air; and as she came darting down through the light outer branches, his long, flexible, powerful trunk was upstretched, catching her softly, gently, and laying her upon the ground without a jar. She had fainted from excess of suffering before the final movement came; and her rescuer had stood watching her, while Charlie tried to revive her, with an expression of deep solicitude. So it was Polo that was the hero, and not myself, after all.

CHAPTER V.

CLOVE ISLAND.

As soon as Polo's anxiety with regard to his mistress was relieved, he perceived the dead body of the ape lying on the ground beneath the tree. He immediately darted at it, with a snort of rage, pierced it again and again with his tusks, and tossed it high in the air, until it was battered and bruised out of all shape. His fury was terrible to behold; but at the command of his cornack, he finally quitted the object of his wrath, and knelt down to receive his passengers, it being high time they were on the homeward journey. Edith continued very weak and ill, from the dreadful nervous shock she had received; she reclined in her brother's arms, with her eyes closed, a shudder occasionally pervading her whole frame. Aba, as he hurried his animal along, was very garrulous, explaining at much length how it was that he had not succeeded in rescuing Miss Edith; how, when he perceived the ape, he had run hither and thither for a club, without succeeding in finding any, and how he was just about to attack the beast empty-handed, when we appeared upon the scene. We received his explanations rather coldly, not convinced that he had shown any particular bravery, which mortified the poor fellow exceedingly. We were perhaps half-way home when Edith, languidly unclosing her eyes, fixed them on my face; after looking a moment, she raised herself from her brother's shoulder:

"Brother Ben," said she, "you are hurt. What has done it? How badly you look—your face is covered with blood."

I expect that I did cut a sorry figure. I had been so absorbed in her condition, that I had forgotten to bathe my wounds, as I might have done, in the spring, before we set out; there was a large purple spot, and three scratches down one side of my face; my shirt was torn, and stained with the blood which came from the wound in my breast, which was much more severe than the one on my face.

"How did it happen?" she inquired.

"It is nothing at all serious," answered I, "and you must not agitate yourself about any thing. Go to sleep, if you can."

But Charlie, thinking that would soonest quiet her, told her that I had climbed the tree, and the ape had struck me. Edith comprehended that I had tried to save her, and gave me a smile of gratitude. Then she lay back, and was soon in a quiet slumber, from which she did not arouse until we reached the house, which was more than an hour after dusk. We found the family out on the piazza, very anxiously awaiting our return. Our appearance demanded an explanation. Charlie briefly related our frightful adventure, when the mother, bursting into tears of mingled joy and terror, caught her beloved child to her bosom, kissed her, and hurried her away to her chamber. She soon came back, however, to thank me for my poor efforts in behalf of her daughter, insisting upon washing my wounds, and dressing them with balsam.

This unpleasant accident prevented our intended elephant-hunt; for it not only made the parents unwilling to permit it, but my breast was so sore that I could not ride. Edith kept her room for two or three days; when she first came out she looked pale and nervous, but soon recovered her customary arch and sparkling gaiety. I was doomed to carry the marks of the affair much longer than any of the others. What good looks I had were injured for the present, though, fortunately, my eyes had received no harm; and I do believe that the disfiguring streaks down my cheek and temple made me more interesting, not only to Edith, but her mother, than I should have proved without them. Nothing could exceed their kindness to me.

Edith gave me a beautiful ebony box, inlaid with gold, and Mrs. Emmons, a costly emerald bracelet and brooch, "for my sister." These

articles I made into a package, adding some little curiosities of my own gathering, and gave into the care of Mrs. Emmons, to be sent to America by the first vessel bound in that direction.

It is one of the peculiarities of time and tide, that they will wait for no man. Of course, they waited not for me; the ship received her lading, the fortnight fled, and the captain announced to me that on the morrow he should sail.

That evening, as I walked the piazza, arm in arm with Charles, he proposed to me to give up the idea of going to China.

"Why not remain in Ceylon?" he inquired. "My father has taken such a fancy to you, that he will be willing to give you a situation full as good as the one at Hong Kong. I believe you will like this island better than you will that stupid empire of the Celestials. You shall make your home with us; mother has consented to it. And, although I am saying what I have no right to say, yet, I do not doubt but that, if you and Edith should be thrown much into each other's society, you might, in time, become my brother in reality. I should like such an arrangement. But, mind you, I am speaking for myself, not her—she is a child, who does not dream of love or marriage."

"We are brothers," I said, pressing his hand, "in soul, Charles. I should like no prospect better than this which you generously hold out to me. But when my uncle fitted me out, I promised to remain faithfully five years in his service. My honor is concerned in keeping to my promise. As to my future wife, I intimated to you once, that I am interested in a sweet New England girl. I do not know that she cares for me. When I arrive in Hong Kong, I may receive a letter from her, containing a cold dismissal of my suit. She is not like your sister—not so talented, brilliant, beautiful; I do not hesitate to avow, that if I had seen Edith with a free heart, I could not, for one day, have resisted her attractions; I have never seen one of her sex to approach her in every fascination—I do not wonder you are proud of her—but my first romantic sentiments were awakened by my New England Annie, and if she writes me that she loves me, I shall keep true to her. Should she refuse me, and can I, with honor, free myself from my engagement to the firm of Ketchum & Co., you will see me back here. Nothing could keep me away. I love this place; it seems as if I had lived here two years, instead of two weeks. I love and reverence your mother—she is my ideal of a woman. I love all of you! more than—" but my voice choked up, and I finished the sentence by wringing his hand. Presently, Edith joined us in our promenade. We sung, and talked, and made plans of future meetings; it was a happy evening, just shadowed with the thought of parting. We were to send letters to each other whenever opportunity occurred.

The next morning I bade all these dear friends farewell. I already began to learn the wanderer's lesson—that, though sweet to make new friends, 'tis sad to part with them. Yet, if, as the poet says:

"'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all,"

then I may congratulate myself on the rich hoard of pleasant memories which I have stored up, as I touched this and that port of friendship while sailing over the wide ocean of time.

I did not forget to say good-by to Polo. Noble elephant! majestic in his affections as in his size. I honored and respected him. Slipping a gold-piece into Aba's hand, I told him never to forget the most generous allowance of rice, the freshest baths, and an occasional sweet-cake for Polo. He promised, and I think Edith saw that the promise was fulfilled.

Before midday we stood out to sea, and when night came down, the distant hills of Ceylon were a mere cloud-bank on the horizon. Sailing in a south-easterly direction, with everything favorable, in a few days we reached a port in Java, where I had a week's run of the island, while coffee was being taken on board; but as no adventure of any note occurred during our stay there, I will give no lengthy account of our proceedings.

Now, instead of making more directly for Hong Kong, the master of the vessel had orders, in case the weather should seem promising, and the ship remain in good trim, to go by the Molucas, or Spice Islands, stopping at Banda for nutmegs, and at Amboyna for cloves. Hidden rocks, sand-banks and shoals make the navigation in this sea of islands dangerous; but by keeping in the more open waters, and making

the ports only of the two mentioned, our captain, who had already made the voyage three times, did not fear to attempt it. As it would largely increase the profits of the trip, he resolved to take the Molucas in his way.

Although no one could in any way blame Captain Jones for the misfortunes which afterward occurred, the resolution proved a disastrous one. As we passed along south of Celebes, and were about entering upon the most difficult part of our navigation, the air began to give indications of one of those awful tempests which sweep the torrid zone with such suddenness. The barometer fell rapidly; there was a sickly lull, and a deadness in the atmosphere, so that we almost suffocated for breath. I took my place on deck to watch the curious yellow which had settled down on the waters—a deep saffron—the horizon was something of the same color; the sky was neither clear nor cloudy, but full of a breathless vapor of a greenish tinge. There was something so oppressive in the heat, and so unnatural in the aspect of the sea and sky, that I felt appalled. Here I had, for two weeks, been sighing for a storm; yet now that one was getting up for my edification, I shrunk from the experience which I had desired.

"What do you think of the weather?" I asked, of the captain, who was walking about, giving his orders in an unusually imperative manner.

"That you will have enough of it to satisfy you, Mr. Perry."

His tone was grave, and did not tend to lessen my anxiety. The sailors obeyed orders with alacrity, making every thing secure below and aloft; and then, as the blow began to threaten, we lay to, under spanker and foretopsail, both doubly reefed.

Presently the shock came; a sudden midnight blackness shot up into the sky, while from the edge of the horizon, rolling toward us with incredible swiftness, came a long white line of dazzling light.

"Brace yourself by the mizzen-mast, sir," cried out a sailor, to me, and I had just time to fling my arms about the mast, and cling for dear life, when the storm struck us. First came a whistling sound, sharp as a knife, then a continuous roar, as of ten thousand thunders. Heavens! what a concussion was that, when the wind took the vessel. I only wondered that it did not pick the ship up and fling it about like a feather. For a few moments nothing was heard but the roar of the elements. The captain's voice, as he bellowed his orders through a speaking-trumpet, was heard by none.

When the first blinding wrath of the storm was spent, we found that our aftersail was split into ribbons, and that we had shipped several seas. A little later, we discovered that several sailors had gone overboard, with a portion of the larboard bulwarks. Poor fellows!—the only wonder is that I did not follow them to their watery grave. I certainly had no business on deck in such a storm as that.

In the second blast of the tempest, only a little less furious than the first, our mizzen-mast went by the board. The crew were set to work to get rid of it, and after two hours of incredible exertion, had it over, which somewhat relieved the ship, which was rolling terribly. It lacked but an hour of sunset when the storm broke upon us, and the horrors of darkness were soon added to our situation. However, the violence of the wind was sensibly diminished. In a communication which I managed to effect with the captain, he told me that if we were out in the open ocean, he should feel comparatively safe, but what he feared was that we should be driven either onto some of the islands, or the rocks and sand-banks of this dangerous Archipelago. We were then nearly helpless, but got up a storm staysail, with which we headed the sea pretty steadily, but we knew not whither we were driving, nor how soon we would strike upon some rock which would send us to the bottom, before we had time to say our prayers.

Fortunately, we escaped for the present, this peril; but long before morning, the carpenter announced a foot of water in the hold, the vessel, stout and seaworthy though she was, being badly strained. The pumps were manned, I taking my turn with the others. The leak proved to be very small; we found that we could pump the water out as fast as it came in; and, by day-break, the carpenter had discovered the leak, and effectually repaired it. This good news, and the cheerful beams of the sun, coming together, restored our animation, so that we scarcely felt the immense fatigues of the night.

I was dripping wet, and my excitement subsiding, I began to feel chilly—so I went down to my closet, out of the captain's cabin, put on dry clothes, and flung myself in my bunk,

where I slept for several hours the deep sleep of exhaustion.

When I awoke I perceived the captain sitting by the little table, his head bent on his hand in an attitude of despondency, while the glimmer of the small lamp did not make things look more cheerful. I was afraid something fatal had occurred and asked if matters were any worse.

"No worse, Mr. Perry, but bad enough. What cargo we've laid in, will be almost ruined by water; and the ship is hardly manageable. If I could make some port where I could have her repaired, we might still do very well with our tea. But the voyage, even then, would hardly pay expenses. It's worse luck than I've had for ten years—though it's not for myself I care—it's the loss of the owners."

"They are rich, and can stand it," I responded. "Don't take that to heart, captain. If you save the ship, you will do all that could be hoped for, under the circumstances."

"Well, I mustn't be down here, repining," he cried, starting up. "I have not eaten nor drank yet, and I must stop for nothing, while the vessel is still in danger. I'll trust no one but myself to keep a look-out, until I know what water I'm in."

Bravely did Captain Jones keep his word. For fifty hours he did not leave the deck. The steward brought him his coffee and hard-tack, where he stood at his post. With our storm staysail we made some progress; and to his sharp eye, ever on the alert, we owed our escape from more than one threatening rock and shoal. We passed several islands meanwhile, but they afforded no secure harbor, and were probably uninhabited, except by savages.

"After a storm comes a calm." In our case, the calm was a long and wearisome one, proportioned to the fierceness of the storm. On the third day after the accident, the gale which followed the first tempest had subsided, through easy gradations, into absolute quiet. The hot sun shone down on the unwrinkled sea, which became smooth as a mirror. We were then out of sight of any land, except one small island, which rose up, about four miles away, presenting a bold, rocky front, seeming some three miles in length, and to possess neither vegetation nor inhabitants.

"This is worse than the storm," remarked the first mate, on the fourth day of our forced rest. In that time we had not moved a quarter of a mile. There was not a breath of air, nor promise of any.

"How long may this state of things be expected to last?" I asked.

"We once experienced a calm which lasted twenty-seven days; it was terribly trying to the patience, I can tell you. The crew got so they had no appetite even for their grog and tobacco; you never saw such a listless, disheartened set—they were like sick men."

"I hope we shan't be kept much longer," observed the steward, joining in the conversation; "if we do we shall run short of water. We did not take in enough to last us to Hong Kong, expecting to replenish at Banda. I must speak to the captain about putting the ship on half allowance, if he intends to make Hong Kong without stopping anywhere to water."

I cast a longing look over at the little island, with which my fancy had been very busy for the four days we had hovered in its vicinity.

"Why not send out an expedition to yonder little pile of rocks?" I asked. "There may be water, if nothing else, to be found there."

"Doubtful," said the mate, "unless it should be a little rain-water in the hollow of the rocks. These islands are frequently without any springs."

"How would you propose to land—scale those perpendicular cliffs, which are at least fifty feet high on their lowest summits?" This question was asked by the steward, with a sarcastic smile, my land-lubberly ignorance being a source of much amusement to officers and crew of the *Adelaide*.

"I should propose," was my answer, ignoring the sarcasm, "to send out a boat to row around to the other side, and see if a landing could not be effected there. There is very likely some inlet, by which we can land—and for my part," I added, "I should like nothing better than just such an exploring expedition. If you were as tired of this monotony as I am, you would enter into such a project with animation. Who knows what we may discover?"

"The island, from this point, don't seem to promise much," was the dry rejoinder of the steward; but the mate caught at my suggestion with pleasure.

"Let us get the captain's consent," he said; "it will at least give us a little variety; and if

we are in need of water, we may make the discovery of some. Water is better than gold, under some circumstances," he continued, in a tone that betrayed to me that he was thinking of a past experience. "I have seen the time when I would have given a quart of the yellow-boys for a pint of water."

I would have asked him to spin for me the yarn which I knew he had ready, but just now I was too eager to consult Captain Jones, and get his orders to go ashore. I started to find him, and soon returned with his approval of the project.

"If we can get a supply of water here, we can better afford to take our time; and the Adelaide is not in trim to hurry herself, even with a favoring wind. She will go as poorly as a lame duck," was his remark, and he forthwith ordered the jolly-boat lowered, and six sailors to row the mate and myself over to the island, whose base we were to skirt, in search of a place to land.

It was about ten A. M., when we were ready to put off, having taken a cold dinner, and expecting to return about sunset.

The sailors were armed with cutlasses and pistols, and we two were thoroughly armed, in case of wild beasts, or ugly savages; though we considered the island too barren to shelter either; and the natives, where there were any, of those southern seas, being usually peaceable and generous to strangers. Still it was prudent to be prepared for emergencies.

"Do you know what day this is?" asked the captain, just before we descended into the boat.

"No."

"Well, it's the first day of the New Year. Looks a little different under this torrid sun from what you've been accustomed to, eh? I think we ought to keep it a little; and I'll see if the steward has anything nice left in his storehouse for supper. We've a live fowl or two, yet, in the coop, and some of the preserved fruit we got in Ceylon. I hope you'll find water on the island. Good luck to you."

The crew cheered us as we pulled away. So little variety was in their present life, that the trifling event of sending off a boat was enough to rouse them from the stagnation into which minds and bodies were sinking. Despite the terrible, scorching rays of the sun, the sailors pulled with a will, and we were soon near enough to reconnoiter the bold ledge of rock which rose up out of the sea, almost without break or fissure, to a height varying from fifty to seventy-five feet. Nothing discouraged by this, we ordered the men to pull around to the westward, and, upon making that side of the island, we discovered it to be of greater magnitude than we had supposed. It presented a front of at least ten miles in extent, while its northern extremity, which was toward the ship, was not over three miles. We continued on about five miles—the cliffs gradually running down, so as to present a wall of only fifteen or twenty-five feet—when we came to the inlet for which we had been looking. A small stream, some two rods wide at the mouth poured into the sea through the rocks, which looked as if a gate had been left open on purpose by the hand of Nature. We turned our course into this stream, proceeding cautiously, for fear of rocks in the channel, or enemies on shore, about fifty yards through the divided cliff.

Already a fresh air came about us, laden with an overpowering fragrance, at once delightful and exhilarating. As we shot through the lofty barriers, and came in view of the green inland, exclamations of delight broke from every one of the party. We had gone through the forbidden gates, straight into an isolated paradise. The other shore of the island was visible, by glimpses, through the groves of trees; not rocky like this, but stretching along a belt of silver sand, the ocean glittering, in a broad, unbroken sheet, beyond. Except the gorgeous birds, chattering and flying among the boughs, not a living thing was visible. There were flowers, everywhere—under foot, in the short, smooth grass, and overhead on the branches. The stream appeared to come from a spring at the head of the island, and glimmered like a silver ribbon here and there, through the enchanting vistas which opened before us.

"The foot of man has never before trod this earth," exclaimed the mate, leaping to the shore. "I name this Wall Island."

"Appropriate, so far as the Wall is concerned, though not very poetical," I said, following him. "What a fragrant, delicious, aromatic odor pervades the air?"

"Don't you recognize it? It is that of cloves! And, by George, this is one vast clove garden. See! this tree, by your side, is one of them.

Examine the flower; it is just right for gathering."

It was a tree somewhat resembling the laurel; the leaves were in pairs, oblong, large, spear-shaped, and of a bright green color.

It was covered with a vast profusion of flowers, growing in clusters, about half an inch in length, the four points of the calyx being prominent, and having, in the middle of them, the leaves of the petals folded over each other, forming a small head, about the size of pea. This was only one of thousands. The island was shaded with trees, and more than half of them were clove-trees—acres and miles of them. A few cocoa-trees were also visible, with half a dozen other kinds peculiar to the East Indies; some of them, the mate informed me, being valuable for dyeing purposes.

The sailors moored their boat, and threw themselves down, glad to enjoy the cool shade. They had first disembarked our luncheon, which we spread in this delightful spot, and ate with appetites increased by the repose, the beauty, and the solitude which surrounded us.

"Mate," said I, "I'm going to put it to the men to vote. We've all a right to have a voice in naming this island, being all equal discoverers. Isn't Clove Island a better and more appropriate name than Wall Island?"

"Ay, ay, sir," responded the tars, heartily.

"Carried," said I. "Henceforth this is Clove Island."

"Upon which may no cloven foot ever tread," said the mate.

We washed down the sentiment with a glass of the cold, pure water, which gushed before us, more welcome than any wine.

After they had eaten, the men stretched out to prepare themselves for the fatigue of rowing back to the ship, by a slumber in the fresh, soft grass. As for me, I enjoyed myself too greatly to sleep. Just to breathe the air was pleasure, and, as I watched the far-off sparkle of the sea, I felt like Tennyson's Lotus-Eaters:

"How sweet it were, leaving the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream!"

* * * * *

We have had enough of action, and of motion, we
Rolled to larboard, rolled to starboard, when the
surge was seething free;
When the wallowing monster spouted his foam-
fountains in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it, with an equal
mind,
In the hollow lotus-land to live, and lie reclined
On the hills, like gods together, careless of man-
kind."

In that hour, it seemed that I could be content to live forever in that perfumed land—a life of indolence, without ambition, without endeavor—only, it should be a life of *love*. I would have my Annie to come and dwell with me in this lovely ocean realm. But all my sweet visions of an Eden, into which Mammon and the spirit of trade entereth not, were dissipated by the next words of the mate.

"I tell you, Perry, this is a jolly piece of luck! Our captain's been dreadfully under the weather since his cargo got wet; now, here's a chance to repair losses, and make a little private spec., besides. 'It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good,' and a dead calm mayn't be so entirely foul as it looks. Here's an immense crop of cloves wants gathering badly. We could fill the ship from stem to stern in three days, without a dollar's expense to anybody. You see the profits'll more'n make up our losses, and give us some fun, too."

"How are they gathered?"

"We can spread cloths under the trees, or sweep the ground clean; then beat the trees with bamboos, or long rods; or pick such as we can reach by hand. The men will think it nothing but a frolic, especially if favored with an extra allowance of grog. The only delay will be in drying them; but three days of this intense sunshine will be enough for them. In the mean time, a small part of the crew can fill the empty water-casks, and we'll be O. K. again. Hurrah for the Adelaide! there's no taking the wind out of her sails!"

Although having no interest in it, as a speculation, I was charmed with the idea of several days' visit to Clove Island. Nothing could have suited me better, so I seconded the mate's enthusiasm.

We returned to the ship with our highly favorable report, which put the captain in good spirits, and we celebrated the completion of New Year's day with such a feast as our resources permitted. Our stock of fowls, taken on at Ceylon, being not quite exhausted, we had chickens with curry and stuffed ducks, with preserved fruit in abundance. The sailors were given

grog and tobacco, with nuts and sweet-cakes all round.

The next morning, very early, the whole ship was astir. All the boats were manned, and a few water-casks taken along—only one trusty officer, and two men, being left on the vessel. We had fine fun that day! The escape from the monotony of ocean life, as well as the novelty of our employment, kept us all in jovial humor, and very willing to work. We beat down cloves by the ton. Selecting dry and sunny spots of rock, we spread them to dry. We had plenty of fresh cocoa to eat and drink, with several other kinds of pleasant fruits.

At sunset the captain and the smallest portion of the crew put back to the vessel to spend the night; but, as the land seemed dry and healthy, and the distance to the ship was several miles, the greater part of the company preferred to remain. The water-casks were filled and returned (very fortunately) that first night. Every part of the island had been explored during the day. There were no indications of its ever having been the abode of man.

"If the Dutch had known of this, we would not have been picking cloves here to-day," remarked the captain.

As the boats put back toward the ship, I mounted the high ledge of rock to the right of the inlet. The sun was just setting. Far off, toward the south, I was certain that I saw land—apparently a large island, which might be, for all I knew, the Amboyna, at which we had expected to lay in a supply of nutmegs.

I thought nothing of this discovery at the time; but it was destined, on the morrow, to assume more importance in my mind.

There were eleven of us who stopped on shore that night. Myself and the mate were armed, as usual; but the men were not, as our explorations of the previous day had satisfied us that there was no danger. We had brought some blankets from the ship. I never enjoyed a sweeter night's rest than that, with the great, blazing, many-colored southern stars shining over me, and the odors of clove and champak trees floating around me, and lulled by the ripple of the stream which fled by my side. At four o'clock we were up, and breakfasting on hard-tack, dried-beef, and rum-and-water. By five, the remainder of the crew had joined us, and we set to work upon our second day's harvest with unflagging spirits.

Our first day's gathering was drying rapidly, and, as the intense calm still continued, we felt that we were improving instead of losing time. We worked for about five hours, and were on the point of "lying off" for a biscuit and a short *siesta*, when the attention of some one of us was attracted to a number of dark spots advancing rapidly over the water, from the direction in which I had discovered land on the previous evening. His exclamation caused us all to turn and look off over the open ocean, which was clearly visible from the western and southern shore. A few moments' observation convinced us that the dark objects were canoes, and that their destination was our island. Here was a pretty interruption! The captain swore, and waxed wrathful, as only an old sea-captain can, and the mate cursed softly. However, we still hoped for the best. As they approached, we perceived that they were filled with large numbers of dark-colored people, men, women and children, and that they had quantities of bamboo rods with them. We at once comprehended that they were aware of the product of the island, and had come clove-gathering, this being now the height of the season. From the fact that they were clothed, quite decently, in grass-cloth garments, and had other marks of semi-civilization about them—some of the females wearing trinkets and cloth of European make—we concluded they were of those native tribes which had been in contact with the whites, and that they, probably, carried on a trade with the English or Dutch, exchanging spices for other articles.

The officers of the Adelaide consulted hastily together. Very unfortunately, the crew were entirely unarmed, except with the big pocket-knives which they carried for cutting tobacco. The question to be decided was, whether these natives would be friendly or unfriendly. The probabilities were that they would be angry when they found strangers intruding upon what they considered their property. We knew that the Dutch, with their characteristic avariciousness, had seized upon all the commerce of spices, and had even attempted to prevent other nations from joining in the spoils, by making efforts to have the spice-trees uprooted in all the islands not immediately under their rule. Between them, and the equally grasping English, the

poor natives had fared rather hard. We conjectured that some tribe had discovered this little spice-island, and had kept the matter to themselves—coming here, yearly, to gather the harvest. If so, would they not be provoked to find those rascally white thieves intermeddling even with this hidden treasure?

All of these speculations of ours proved, ultimately, to be the truth. In the meantime, the canoes struck the shore, and their crews, to the number of at least two hundred, came swarming to the land like bees. The three officers of the *Adelaide*, and myself, were armed with revolvers and knives. We observed that all the men among the new arrival were also armed, with thick, short clubs. There were, at a rough estimate, a hundred of these swarthy fellows, with their clubs swung at their backs. What chance would eighteen of us, nearly unarmed, have, in a "free fight," with the strangers? Yet Captain Jones was very loth to give up all the rich results of our two days' harvest, and to retreat, ignominiously. It was against the Yankee grain. We took the vote of the company, and it was unanimous, even among the comparatively defenseless sailors, to remain, and, at least, to "see where the land lay." If the new-comers proved friendly, all right; we would agree upon a fair division of the spoils. If they commenced an attack, we were to fight, and fall back to our boats, which were in the rear, most opportunely for us—the officers to cover the retreat of our men with their fire-arms.

As, yet, the visitors had not discovered us; but now, as they advanced up the beach toward the grove, the first thing they came upon was a long row of sheets, which we had spread thickly with cloves to dry in the sun. They at once seemed to comprehend that intruders had snatched from them their secret wealth; they set up a mingled howl of rage and grief, which, I will confess, made the blood feel a little chilly in my toes. Then their dark eyes flashed lightning into the grove, in search of the marauders. They soon discovered us, drawn together in a compact body, and looking insignificant enough, no doubt, before their superior numbers. Instantly every war-club was swung from the shoulder into the hand; the women and children fell to the rear, and the wild band rushed forward, as if to annihilate us. We four, with the revolvers, stood in the advance; but as Captain Jones had no desire to spill the blood of these innocent people, if it could be avoided, he took out his white handkerchief, and held it up, thinking that, in their intercourse with civilized nations, they had perhaps learned the meaning of a flag of truce. They paid not the least attention to the symbol, though, evidently, they knew the character of our fire-arms—the sight of them, held steadily, giving them a momentary check. Perceiving that only four of us were thus armed, they took fresh courage, probably not aware that these little instruments could deliver more than one fire apiece.

Enraged beyond expression, and "spilling for a fight," (as a jolly Irish tar declared in my ear, as he stood behind me, with a jack-knife in one hand, and an impromptu shillalah in the other) the appearance of the attacking party was sufficiently frightful. How suddenly had human passions changed the aspect of this Garden of Eden! With a yell, as if to inspire each other and terrify us, they charged upon our little band. Our first fire, although it caused three of their number to tumble to the earth, did not seem to make much impression on them; they pressed us so closely that we were obliged to give way a step or two; but as we still continued to fire, rapidly, and with some degree of coolness, each of us bringing down a man at nearly every discharge, the savages began to exhibit some consternation. All this time we were slowly retreating; but our furious enemies had nearly encircled us, and our sailors were taking their share of the engagement, defending themselves with their knives, and some of them securing the clubs of fallen savages, with which they laid about them in a style which rivaled that of their opponents.

I had fired five of the six shots in my revolver, with good effect, and had leveled it at a brawny fellow who was pressing me hard, when he sent it whirling out of my hand by a rapid stroke of his club; instantly he raised his weapon a second time to break my skull for me, but I dodged, stooped, picked up a club from the hand of a fallen warrior, parried his blow, gave him another as good, and could have stood my ground with him. But superior numbers were now beginning to tell against us. Another came to the aid of his comrade; I kept them both at bay, for perhaps two minutes, then a

blow from a third unseen foe, in my rear, felled me to the ground—a fiery darkness came over me, and I knew no more.

CHAPTER VI.

A PRISONER OF WAR.

WHEN I awoke from that deathlike stupor, the scene was changed. I unclosed my eyes, to perceive that the sun was near setting, and that the savages were all about me, beating the cloves from the trees with their bamboo rods. None of my companions were visible. They had either been driven from the field, or were murdered, or captives like myself. A captive I knew myself to be, for I felt the grass rope about my ankles. I was bruised, sore, and uncomfortable, so that I could not restrain a slight groan. Instantly the savage nearest me, who was a woman, gave a soft cry, which attracted the attention of the others, who ran to look at me. All was commotion about me. Expressions, which I took to be those of hate and revenge, were freely poured forth. And truly, I did not wonder; for when I raised myself so as to sit up, I saw the bodies of thirteen of their people whom we had slain lying in a row, at a distance, in the grass. Around these the relatives were keeping up a moan, though the rest of the visitors seemed to have gone to their business of picking. I expected nothing better than to be instantly killed. In only one face did I see any signs of pity, and that was the woman's whose cry had first attracted the others. When my eyes met hers, I could not turn mine away, and I have no doubt there was a mute appeal for life in them; and, although she said nothing, gave me not even a gesture, I felt that she was my friend. A few moments later I saw her talking earnestly with a tall savage, evidently a man of influence, whose brow was dark with anger, as she argued with him. He turned frequent furious glances at me, and shook his club, while the crowd gathered about him, as it were, to hear the decision. Oh, what would I not have given to be able to understand their language!—that I might know what fate was in store for me. There was much gesticulation and warm discussion—there were two parties, evidently—one who sided with the chieftain and one with the young woman. At last, the latter seemed to gain the approbation of the majority; and soon, I earnestly watching, concluded that her views, whatever they were, were to be adopted. At this I felt a flutter of hope. As I have said, I felt that this young creature was my friend. Heavens! what would my emotions have been had I known that she was eagerly recommending that I, instead of being instantly beaten to death, should be kept until the close of the harvest, which would take about three days, and then should assist at the grand feast to wind up with, in the shape of a well-roasted man!—that she was eloquently pleading the fatness of my limbs, the youthfulness of my appearance, and the tenderness of my flesh!

Yet such was the case. All that health which I had gained on my ocean voyage, and which had shown itself in the act of rounding a person which had been thinned by growing too rapidly—all these good looks upon which I had (just a little) prided myself, were now become recommendations to secure me this terrible post of honor at the coming festival. One old hag did come up to me and feel of my flesh and joints, as I have seen purchasers pressing the breast-bone and examining the color of the legs of a fowl. I shivered under the touch of the fingers, as the awful comprehension of what it all meant, forced itself upon my brain.

Could I, then, be mistaken in the construction I placed on the interference of the girl on my behalf? I watched her constantly. Presently, when the company had again gone to their work, she began to beat the tree in whose shade I was chained. What a beautiful creature she was, for a savage!—a new style of beauty which struck my ardent imagination as something lovelier than any description I had ever read of Indian beauties. Black hair, straight and glossy, descending to her knees; a low, smooth forehead, delicate features, and a complexion difficult to describe, unless it be to call it "ruddy gold." It was a clear, light brown, with a golden tinge, and a warm streak of crimson in the cheek. Scarlet lips, and eyes soft, black and lustrous—not bold eyes, but modest as loving—with a form the perfection of all symmetry, rounded and supple.

She wore a rather full garment of pliable grass-cloth—bleached as white as linen, and nearly as fine—which fell just below the knee; it was fastened about the waist with a girdle of crimson flannel, worked with the feathers of

birds and colored threads, and came up well on the shoulders. Her arms and ankles were bare; and what made me think her a girl of good family was the silver necklace and bracelets which she wore, which were of some value. She had a white cloth bound about her head, to protect her from the excessive heat of the sun—which had something the air of a Turkish turban; it was sufficiently picturesque, but I liked her better when she took it off, as she did, after a while, when, wearied with beating the cloves, she sat upon the grass, ate cocoa, and looked at me.

It was now sunset. I felt very hungry, faint, tired and sore. My head ached dreadfully. It was half broken by the blow which had knocked me down and rendered me insensible for so long a time. I felt a keen anxiety to learn the fate of my comrades. From the fact that I saw no others, prisoners like myself, and no dead bodies of white men, I hoped they had made good their escape to the boats. And if such were the case, the thought that they surely would return, armed to the teeth, to attempt my defense, thrilled me with something like comfort. "As long as there is life there is hope." Surrounded by this savage and unfriendly band, deserted by my company, left helpless on this lonely island, to be fattened for a feast of cannibals, life still seemed to be as certain as ever—I could not believe the cord was to be so suddenly snapped. I thought of Annie—of my dear mother and home—and wished I had something to eat, and that my head would stop aching.

It was probably the policy of my captors not to allow me to grow thin, through being famished, during the three days before I was to be roasted. While I lay there, languidly gazing at the young savage, and off on the peaceful ocean, still unrippled by a breeze, the same old hag who had felt of me, brought me a cake made of bruised rice, which was tolerably fit to be eaten. She also brought a cocoa-nut, which she cracked for me, giving me the milk to drink. I was very feverish and thirsty, and I quaffed the draught eagerly. But when she cracked another and another nut, insisting by gestures, and even by beating me with a bamboo rod, that I should drink, and I was compelled to swallow, until I was full up to my throat, I began to look upon myself in the light of a well-fed pig. It was evidently her intention to fatten me on milk, so that my flesh would be as tender and succulent as that of a baby or a roasting-pig. Other old hags came grunting about, watching the process, to be sure that the task was well performed.

When they had stuffed me to their satisfaction they let me alone, though there were always plenty of black, flashing eyes keeping guard over me. The young girl had now been joined by several others of her own age, two or three of them very pleasant-looking, and not ugly; but none so pretty as she who had first attracted my attention. I fancied there was some natural interest, independent of the eating question, in the curious regards which they fixed upon me. They would laugh and show their white teeth; and then, as if scared at showing how much they were pleased, would look away, forcing their countenances into gravity. I had read how the women of all savage countries, especially those of dark complexion, always admired the white man; and I thought it possibly for my benefit to be as agreeable as possible. So I assumed a sad, melancholy air, once or twice, when they broke into a giggle, smiling out of sympathy. "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin;" I verily believe such was the case with these merry young things and myself. I saw that they liked me. And I believe if they had had the power, or had dared to assert their wishes, that my salvation would have been secured.

As for the young girl who first noticed me, she did not giggle and laugh like the others; yet I never turned my eyes to her face, but I met a steady compassionate gaze, full, too, of more than pity. My head felt so very badly that I took my handkerchief from my pocket, held it toward her, and by the mute language of signs, intimated that I wished her to dip it in the creek, which was not far away, and bind it about my head. To my surprise, she frowned, remaining motionless, utterly refusing to do me this little kindness. Some of the others took the handkerchief, wet it, and fastened it about my brow, even slyly stroking my cheeks, as they did so, as they would have stroked a pet kitten. To pay them for this service I took some small silver coins from my purse and distributed them. They evidently knew their value, and were highly delighted. I tossed a

half-dollar to the silent beauty, when she hurled it back to me with a look of scorn. I felt more disheartened than I can express by this change in her conduct; for I had gathered, I know not what of comfort and hope, from her gentle, tender regards.

A wild scene now occurred, which for a time engrossed all my attention. The relatives of the deceased warriors, amid yells and funeral cries, conveyed the bodies of the dead to three of their canoes, and chanting a piercing death-song, rowed away toward their home, just as the deep flush of twilight gave way to the full luster of the moon. The rest of the party, having escorted them to the shore, returned inland, and for a time seemed much excited. Threatening gestures and revengeful looks chilled me with fear. The young girl sat silent, with downcast eyes, but I could guess that she was intently listening, by the changes which flitted over her face.

The warrior who had before threatened me, approached me with a club. This time, it was the old hags, and not the young girl, who interfered. He was again induced to subdue his revenge to his appetite. In such sickening alternations of hope and fear an hour passed away. I am not ashamed to confess that I suffered much mental distress. If I could have been unbound, a club put in my hand, and left to sell my life as dearly as possible, death would not have been so terrible. But to be knocked in the head, like a chained brute, took the courage out of me.

After a time, the discussion ended; the whole party had a fine feast of fish, which they roasted in the sand, fruit and nuts; and then, wearied out with a long day of excitement and labor, they appeared glad to betake themselves to rest. Eight young fellows, the bravest of their number, lay down close to me, after having first examined my fastenings, to see that all were secure. They did not intend to allow their victim a chance to escape.

I could not sleep. A burning fever had seized me. Strange, contorted visions of the different scenes through which I had lately passed, flitted through my brain, mingled with sweet glimpses of the old apple-trees and clover-fields at home. I was partially delirious; though not so much so, but that, at intervals, I had the full use of my senses, and laid there, wondering if it could be possible that my friends had entirely deserted me—if they would allow the night to pass, and make no effort at rescue.

It must have been long after midnight. The moon had set; only the large stars gave forth a clear, faint light; my fever had diminished under the cool dews, and all my senses were on the alert. I closed my eyes; as I lay there I heard not the slightest sound, when I suddenly felt soft fingers at work over me, loosening the ropes which bound my feet. I lay perfectly quiet; for it flashed over me, like a revelation, what work was being done. Presently a light hand touched my face. I unclosed my eyes; the girl in whom I had taken such an interest was bending over me, her finger on her lip. She motioned me to rise; I did so, without noise, then silently, sinuously, as a panther or a serpent, she glided amid the forms now sunk in the deepest sleep of night, I following her with equal caution. For half an hour we continued this slow, vigilant pace, until the outskirts of the encampment were reached. Afar off I could see the faint glitter of water; we were still a mile from the ocean. Now, my companion took my hand in hers, and started on a run, and so swift were her feet, that I, wounded as I was, could hardly keep up with her. Once or twice she uttered a low syllable of impatience at my tardiness; she feared discovery and pursuit; I could hear the panting of her bosom, and knew what risks she was running for my sake. At last we reached the shore. The canoes were all moored together in a little fleet. She sprang into the smallest one, which was, however, a lumbering, ungraceful concern; I followed; both of us caught up paddles, and pushed out into the sea. Already a red glow came shooting up the east, for the tropic night was brief.

She motioned to me to steer the skiff; I understood that she wanted me to make for the ship, which was not visible from this side of the island. We bent ourselves to the task of paddling the unwieldy canoe. Verily, we needed a good start, in case of pursuit, for our boat required half a dozen pairs of arms.

Both of us turned frequent glances back to the shore. It was every moment growing lighter. At last we had skirted the eastern coast, and rounded the bold headland at the north; we were out of sight of our pursuers, even should they now be searching for us.

An hour later, as the sun shot up into the horizon, we lay under the long shadow of the Adelaide; I shouted to the men on watch to help us aboard; my companion climbed up the side like a squirrel—we were safe on board. I turned to look at my preserver. Her face was flushed with exercise and emotion; her breast heaved; she gave me a triumphant smile, and sitting down on the deck-planks, looked up at me with timid joy.

CHAPTER VII.

LOTUS.

I RECEIVED the congratulations of the officers and crew on my escape. They were astonished at beholding me alive; for they had supposed me killed before they left the island. This was their excuse for not coming back with all their force and attempting a rescue. The mate had seen me receive what he supposed was a death-blow, after I was down; and as the tide of battle was setting against the whites, they had retreated to their boats. One of the fore-castle men had since died; another had an arm broken. The captain was savage about the loss of his men, as also about the loss of the cargo of cloves.

"What's the use of giving up so, captain?" I asked. "Go and get your cloves. Those black rascals have added enough to your score—as much as you can spare space for. Take your men, arm them well, go back, and drive off the savages. Their number is less than it was yesterday. Not only what you killed then, but their relatives have all gone off to dispose of the corpses. Now is your time, before these return, perhaps with additions to their party. Take possession of the stock on hand; we can finish the drying process on deck."

The captain swore a big oath that he would take my advice. The boats were speedily got in readiness; all hands were piped to man them; all the available weapons put on board. I wanted to go along; but he would not hear of it. He said I must go to bed; or I would have a dangerous fever—he was his own doctor, and he now proceeded to examine and dress the wounds upon my head. When this was done, and all ready for a start, our glances turned upon the young creature crouching on the deck. We inquired, by gesture, if she wanted to go back to her people. She shook her head, burst into tears, and murmured a few broken words, which sounded not unfamiliar.

"Avast there," cried one of the sailors, who was a Dutchman, "let me hail this strange little craft, sir. I believe I can make out her meaning—for it's Dutch colors she's sailing under."

Surely enough, the pretty savage was stammering a few Dutch words, which we easily guessed she had learned from the colonists, who were the virtual owners of many of the spice islands.

"What does she say, Frans?" asked the captain, who was impatient to be off.

"She says her people will kill her if she goes back," answered the soft-hearted tar, "and sure they would, cap'n—hadn't you better take her in tow?"

"What in thunder 'll we do with her?" was the pertinent reply.

While the brief discussion was going on, the young creature looked up in my face as if to read her fate. I felt awkward—embarrassed—I wished, positively, that she were in Halifax—for I saw the men on a broad grin, and the officers smiling—but I was not mean enough to send her back to pay the ransom of my life with her own. A true and manly impulse made me brave. I looked into all the curious, sarcastic faces, and said, gravely:

"Gentlemen, she has periled her life to save me. I cannot send her back. Since she has left people and land for me, I will do the best I can with her—she shall be to me as a sister. As such I shall care for her, and protect her."

This ended the matter for the present. The men, feeling a momentary generous impulse, cheered my little speech; then the boats were quickly manned and pulled away, leaving me alone with the wounded man and the young girl. Every other person had been called to bear part in the effort to dislodge the savages and recover our spice.

I had put a bold face on my situation, yet I felt intensely embarrassed by it. This young creature had thrown herself upon my care in such a manner that I could not turn her off. The ship was a bad place for her; though, as I vowed, I intended to take her under my protection as carefully as if she were my sister. If I had been going home I should not have been so troubled, as in that case I knew

my mother would take her off my hands, and be good to her, out of gratitude for her having saved my life. But in the strange land to which I was going, without a relative or friend of the poor girl's own sex, I should not know what to do with her. While debating these things in my mind, I would occasionally turn an anxious glance at her, as she sat silent and uncomplaining, in the spot where she had first placed herself. I always found her looking at me, with a soft, submissive gaze, which almost drew the tears to my own eyes. I wanted to show her that I was grateful, and that I considered she had a claim on me; yet I did not wish to make her fond of me. Here was a dilemma which would have puzzled an older and wiser person than myself. I brought her the best there was on the vessel to eat; and, looking over my little stores, I selected a chain of ebony beads, with a cross of the same material attached, which I had purchased in Ceylon, and hung it about her neck. She received it with the same delight which an infant would have done. Seeing her happy with her rosary, I went down to my berth, and took a much-needed sleep. When I arose the day was far spent. As I ascended to the deck, I perceived my little friend slumbering gently, the beads clasped to her bosom. She was aroused by the shouts of the approaching crew, who soon came alongside, the boats filled as full as possible with a freight of cloves.

I knew, of course, when I saw them, that the expedition had been successful. All was now bustle and confusion, and it was some time before I could be given the particulars. They had taken the savages completely by surprise, who, seeing their approach with plenty of cutlasses and firearms, made but little resistance, before fleeing to their boats, which they immediately directed to the far island.

They could have been back earlier with their first boat-load of the spoils, had not the excessive heat of the middle of the day prevented. Now they were in haste to unload, and go off for the rest of the cloves, as it was not unlikely the savages might return with re-enforcements. This they did; the third trip was made late into the night, by the light of the moon, and this finished up the business, we now having possession of all the cloves gathered, and as many as the vessel would have storage for, if she reserved space for the tea she was to lay in at Hong Kong.

The next day I was ill with the fever of my wounds and the heat of the weather; but I insisted on giving up my little closet to my charge, and had a hammock swung for me, where I could have more air. It seemed to me that I should die in the close, stifling atmosphere. Fortunately, in a day or two, a light breeze sprung up. The carpenter during the long calm, had repaired the vessel to the best of his ability with the materials on hand, and the Adelaide was prepared to take advantage of the first ripple of air. Oh, how more than delicious were our sensations when we saw a light flow of wind ruffle and darken that glossy surface which had mocked us so long, and felt it strike our brows, giving us a new lease of life!

I revived under it with a wonderful rapidity. Through the few days of my sickness, the dark girl hardly left my side. She kept the cloths constantly cool upon my burning head, and fanned me with tireless patience.

I had learned her name; it was unspellable, but much like Lotus—so I called her Lotus. Her gentle attentions won upon me day by day. As I was convalescing, I amused myself learning her to speak English. The first word that I taught her was "Ben." By pointing to myself when I spoke it, I showed her that it belonged to me, and she soon called me Ben. She learned rapidly to utter such words as she could speak at all, and to know their meaning, but many of our rough, harsh sounds she never could master.

Her demeanor was so shy and modest that no one had the heart to ridicule her, or to mention our relation with disrespect. Besides, they knew I would knock the first man over who did so, were it the captain himself. A thousand times I wished that innocent, devoted maiden, who revealed her love for me in every glance and action, were safe with my mother, or some other good, Christian woman, who would be as tender of her as her flower-like nature demanded. A flower she was, her soul opening to the rays of kindness, and closing when the least breath of blame blew coldly on her.

I would have been less than human if I had not grown to love Lotus. I did love her, as one did a child who confided in him. I do not know but that, had I not loved Annie, I should even

have been willing, ignorant and "savage" as she was, to make her my wife.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SHIPWRECK.

ALL this time the *Adelaide* was proceeding with great caution, as she was out of her usual soundings. But the extreme watchfulness of her officers availed nothing in the end. On the ninth day of January, four days after she got under way, she struck upon a rock, which lay concealed under the water, and stove a hole in her bottom. About twenty minutes before the accident, the captain sounded and found fifty fathoms; all was cheerfulness and busy activity on board—now, all was despair and confusion. We were entirely out of sight of land, in that immense southern ocean, and the ship could not possibly keep her head above water more than an hour, if that long. All that could be done, was to lower the boats, load them with a few casks of water and such provisions as could be rescued from the rapidly-encroaching flood. Fortunately, it was in the middle of the day, so that the horrors of darkness were not added to the scene. When the shock came, Lotus was taking her noon siesta down in her little closet; and I went down to bring her up, and found the water already wetting the cabin floor. I seized a small kit, into which I thrust a few of my dearest treasures, caught a blanket from the bed, and hurried Lotus up onto the deck. It was impossible for her to fully understand what had occurred; and when it was explained to her that the ship was sinking, she showed much less alarm than the rest of us. She was accustomed to the water, could swim, so she told me when we were looking over the bulwarks together; and when she saw the boats she seemed to think then all-sufficient for our purposes. Poor child! she knew not the illimitable fields of ocean, nor could she foresee the sufferings which were to come upon her.

There were twenty-two of us, all told, and we divided into two boats, one of which was under the orders of the captain, the other, of the mate. There was time given us to arrange ourselves with as much comfort as such circumstances would permit; we secured water, biscuit, brandy, a caddy of tea, a few pounds of ground coffee, a few blankets, and the ship's compass. Scarcely had our preparations for the calamity been made, when we were obliged to pull away vigorously from the vessel, which suddenly settled down with a lurch, until only a bit of her bowsprit was visible, sticking above the water, where she had caught and rested on the treacherous rocks below. Tears came into many eyes when the ship went down. She had breasted many a storm as easily as a duck breasts the ripples of a stream; and even when dismantled and injured by that terrible tropic tornado, she had recovered herself and held bravely on her way, until this hidden danger had snared her. Now the good ship *Adelaide* was no more.

We lingered around the spot the rest of that afternoon and night. We could not bear to leave it, while a vestige of the vessel remained; and then, where should we go to? The captain reckoned he had better put back and try and make the port of some of the inhabited spice islands—that was the nearest land, and *that* was a dreary distance away. His hope was, that, by getting into the course of vessels running either to or from China, we should be picked up. The boats were kept close together, and the captain was to guide them.

The first day we suffered more from the intolerable heat of the sun than from any other cause. Lotus appeared to bear it very well, being accustomed to it. We contrived to make a tolerable awning of our blankets and some bamboo rods which chanced to remain in the boats; at night we passed a rope between the boats to keep them together, for there arose considerable wind, and clouds obscured what light the stars might have given, the moon now not rising until nearly morning. It was an anxious night, for we dreaded, above all things, to be parted.

Before daylight it began to rain. Thursday, the 11th, it rained gently all day. A thick, warm fog enveloped the ocean, so that one could not see more than three or four yards from him. We were in constant danger of losing sight of each other, which, once lost, in all probability would never be regained. There was not even sun enough to steer by, and if any ships had been in our path, there was more chance that they should run us down, than that they should rescue us. It was a long, tedious day; before dark, we lashed the boats together so that they

could not get apart. Our only comfort through the dragging hours was to hail each other, from boat to boat, for misery loves company.

Friday, the 12th, was a day whose brief history—brief to you, oh, reader, but interminable to us—I scarcely care to recall. In our boat was the poor fellow whose arm had been broken in the fight on Clove Island. He was the jolly Irishman who had stood behind me in that memorable battle, and his shillalah did good service without doubt. Mike had a gay disposition, and had borne the confinement and pain of his broken limb with great cheerfulness. But ever since we had taken to the open boat, he had been growing seriously ill. The loss of the *Adelaide* weighed on his spirits, and a fever, which might not have developed under more favorable circumstances, now seized upon him with resistless fury. It was little we could do for his comfort, poor fellow! The rain continued to fall at intervals, relieved occasionally by a burst of sunshine, only to make the damp and fog appear more sickening when it again closed in. Mike was delirious; now he would sing fragments of drinking-songs, and anon, he would "fight his battles o'er again," the natural pugnacity of his character coming out laughably under the irritation of fever. But none of us felt disposed to laugh. Lotus shrunk close to my side, while her great dark eyes regarded the sufferer with pity and awe—once or twice I was certain she was praying to her heathen deity.

About the middle of the afternoon, the clouds cleared away—a deep-blue sky, cool air, and pleasant sunshine, made us all feel, for a little while, less miserable. Even Mike appeared to revive; but it was nature's dying effort. After lying quiet a short time, he spoke up suddenly, clear and loud:

"It's hard, sure, to go, and I only twenty-three. It's my mother I care about, though. She'll be looking for her b'y home. Jake, if you live to get out of this, you'll tell what happened me, won't ye? and give her my dyin' love."

Jake promised, with a choking in his throat. He spoke only once more:

"The *Adelaide*'s gone to Davy Jones's locker, and it's Mike must follow her, sure. I haven't shaped my course just right to make sure of a port in heaven, but I'll trust to luck, now, and mebbe it'll be all right."

A few moments after he had consoled himself by "trusting to luck," a spasm seized him, and presently all was over.

"Few and short were the prayers we said,"

as we consigned him to the deep. We had not weight enough to attach to the body to make sure of its sinking; but the tide carried it away from us, and the twilight shut it from our sight.

Saturday, the 13th, we had the most agreeable weather of any day since the accident; but this exposure, night and day, in open boats, was beginning to tell on us, and the confinement of the narrow space into which we were crowded, became almost intolerable. Alas! we thought then that our sufferings were great, but we had not yet tested the capacity of human endurance. With food and water sufficient to last us two weeks, we fully expected ultimate relief, and therefore gave ourselves the privilege of grumbling about present miseries. Everybody grumbled, more or less, except dark, silent, patient Lotus. Dear child! I did my best to screen her from the sun and the night dew, and to enable her to exercise her cramped limbs. She was not accustomed to our salt food, and refused meat entirely; the biscuit suiting her taste better. In the habit of taking boundless exercise, by nature restless as a bird, I think the confinement was more wearying to her than to any one else; yet she did not murmur; and for every little service I rendered her, she returned me such a warm, loving smile that I could hardly believe, in looking at her, that she suffered. I strove to vary the monotony of the time by going on with my instructions in English, and by watching the dawn in her mind of the new ideas which she gathered from my words. All the other passengers listened, and grew interested, for the lack of anything else to absorb their attention. Her childlike demeanor, and her patience, were so touching, that I think any of that rough crew would have interposed his own life between her and harm.

Well, the night of the 13th came down, and brought with it an irremediable disaster. A little flurry of wind arose, in the darkness, brief and not very fierce; but the rope was broken which had nightly bound the two boats together; we were driven for a little while hither

and thither, our boat tossed like a feather on the waves. In vain we shouted, one or more of us, constantly, to the captain to keep within hail; in vain he answered, endeavoring again to make our company. When the flurry was over, our companion was not within call. Sleepless and anxious, we waited for the dawn, which came only to show us that our friends were not within the range of our vision.

Thus did Sunday, the 14th, break upon us, more hopeless and downcast than we had before been. I can not tell, nor hope to convey an idea, of how desolate we felt when we found the other boat had utterly disappeared. The mate had the command of our boat; he had with him a pocket compass, so that we could still get our bearings.

That day I read the morning service from a prayer-book which I had in my kit, and we all joined in a hymn. It seemed a *little* like home, and hope, to make this attempt to keep the Sabbath.

But why dwell on the monotonous story of our fast increasing wretchedness? The history of one day was like that of another, only that each day our strength and spirits gave way a little more. At the end of seven more days of torture, we had not courage even to pray, except wild, spasmodic bursts of prayer ejaculated by some one at intervals. It seemed to me, and I believe to the rest, as if we had *always* been living in an open boat on an interminable ocean—as if all the past were but a pleasant dream—and the faces of friends floated in my memory as parts of some intangible vision—as if there was no reality in the thought that a change might come, and we might some time live as we were racked by dreams of having lived. Thus far, none of us were absolutely sick; we were only worn and weather-beaten, with the wild look of those who are constantly watching for one thing which does not come. Lotus had changed much; the peculiar rich scarlet had faded from lip and cheek, and the exquisite roundness of the most beautiful figure I have ever beheld had wasted sadly. It grieved me the worst of anything to look at her. And if I looked at her, she would be sure to smile. Ah, Lotus, beautiful creature! heathen, "uncivilized," though thou wert, thou remainest in my heart the perfect type of woman. Thy devotion was boundless. Home, and clime, and people, peace, health and life, these were not too much for thee to bring a smiling sacrifice to the feet of him whom thou didst love.

On the second Sabbath, the mate put us on half allowance of bread and water. Not once, during all those terrible days, had we sighted ship or land. And if we had gone thirteen days without, might we not go thirty? We dared not face the question; we did not wish to think of the future. And indeed, our powers of reflection were very much impaired. A sort of stupor supervened upon our intense anxiety, and mercifully blunted the sharpness of our distress.

Another week passed away. During that awful period, five of our number died, and were thrown overboard. Curiously-enough, it was the stoutest and most robust of the sailors who first succumbed to this siege of misery. The mate, who was not a strong man, but who possessed a strong will, myself, who lived for Lotus, and Lotus, who lived for me, were the three who bore our privations the most firmly. It was a striking example of the power of mind over matter. Those men who had least mental food to live upon starved soonest under physical hardships. But these were now passing the bounds of human endurance. There was but a gallon of water left, and our allowance of food was half a biscuit twice a day. Doubtless we should all have perished during the third week, had not the tea and coffee sustained yet a little longer our wasted existence. A few kernels of the roasted berry were distributed to each, or a few pinches of the tea, which, by holding in our mouths, and chewing, not only somewhat relieved our oppressive thirst, but revived our ebbing vital energies.

I saw that Lotus was failing rapidly, and I wondered how she lived from day to day. We had made her a place to recline in the bottom of the boat, with two or three blankets, and there she lay, very weak, and much emaciated, but the large, loving eyes as beautiful as ever. When I saw how fast she was going, I resolved to save at least half of my own miserable portion of food for her, in the wild hope, every hour, that some sail would heave in sight, and we might both be restored to our young and joyous promise. But the first time I made the attempt to palm off on her some of my own portion, she showed such horror at the thought,

and refused it with such vehemence, that I did not dare to repeat the experiment. In vain I tried expedients to deceive her into accepting that which was apportioned to me. I could not mislead her. No, it remained for her, artless and childish as she was, to deceive me with the stratagem of one who dies for love.

It was the twentieth day after the shipwreck. Without strength to raise myself from where I leaned against one of the seats; I sat in the bottom of the boat so absorbed in watching Lotus, that, for a time, I forgot to look, with my strained and blood-shot eyes, for the ever-expected, never-appearing ship that was to save us. The three other men who remained of our crew were also diverted from their watch to gaze at the dying girl. We had almost lost the semblance of humanity, so ragged, weather-beaten, unkempt, blackened and wasted were we, with our haggard features, and half-insane expression. But Lotus, though her slight form had shrunk until there seemed only a little bundle of bones under the blanket, had not changed so much in her face. Her silky hair flowed down on either side, and her soft eyes were luminous as they answered back my look. At last, she began to gasp for breath. I stooped and gathered her in my arms; I pressed her head to my bosom, and, for the first time, kissed her. As I did so, she looked into my eyes with an expression of happiness. Then, as I saw she was going, I begged the steward for a little water from the last there was in the cask. But Lotus shook her head, and closed those poor, panting lips—she would not have it! By an extraordinary effort she put her hand in her breast and drew forth a little bag from the folds of her waist, forced it into my hand, smiled triumphantly, and died.

What, think you, was in that little bag? Every grain of the coffee, every leaf of the tea which that poor girl had received. She had saved it—all—for me!—to prolong my life, until help should arrive, after her own loving heart was cold. Such is the devotion of woman—such the love of that young Indian girl—such was Lotus.

CHAPTER IX.

"HOME AGAIN."

AFTER Lotus died I must have sunk into a kind of stupor; I remember nothing that occurred; I could not force myself to touch the precious morsel she had bequeathed me; and passed into a state of semi-insensibility. I know not how long after—the mate says it was twelve hours—that one of my wretched companions shook me, and shouted aloud:

"A sail! a sail!"

I looked up, with blurred and blinded eyes. Truly, there was a ship hovering on the horizon! At that strange sight, we, who had been too weak to speak above a whisper, wept, laughed, and shouted. We staggered to our feet and hoisted a blanket on a bamboo rod. Would the vessel see us, or would she not? My momentary excitement was passing, a faintness seized me—I think I should have died in that moment; but I crammed my mouth with the strong green tea and sucked a little strength from it—so that, after all, I owed the preservation of my existence to that love-offering of Lotus. By and by, we saw the ship tack and stand toward us. I distributed all my little store to my three companions—we drank the half-pint of water which remained—no need to save it longer! No! no! drink, comrades every drop!

An hour later, we were hoisted over the side of the vessel which came to our rescue, four as miserable objects as you can have any conception of. Aid came too late to one of us—a sailor died that afternoon—the rest of us struggled for a time with death and disease, but finally conquered.

When I gained life enough to take an interest in what was passing around me, I found that I was on a large American vessel, bound for—home! I was homesick enough to punish me for running away. I used to lie on the deck, wasted and melancholy, pining for a sight of the old apple-trees, and longing, with a sick appetite, for a piece of mother's pie. They say that every one must have the home-fever once; and I had it then. During those dreary days I forgave my father the harshness which had driven me forth. I reflected, that it was the way he had been brought up, and he knew no better way. He had led a hard and toilsome life, and supposed his boys must tread the same path. Poor father! I loved him then, for the first time—and I resolved that, if toil of mine could secure me a competence, I should contrive to smooth his declining years with rest and ease. As for the sweet dreams I had of my sister Emme-

line and Annie Anderson, the winds and waters may whisper them—I cannot tell them. Oh! to lay my head in the orchard-grass at Annie's feet, and look up into her beautiful, lovely face!

"Oh, lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
O'er my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast,
Oh, press it close to thine again,
Where it will break at last!"

Thus did I sigh and dream, my adventurous spirit all gone from me. But the home-sickness at last ran its course, and I recovered from that fever, as I did from the exhaustion and lassitude consequent upon that twenty-one days of suffering. As I grew stronger, I regained my courage, and was ready to face any future which fate might have in store for me.

A flood of emotions rushed over me when we steered into New York bay. I remembered the high ambitions and romantic dreams with which my breast had been full, when I sailed out of that harbor. I was tired of wandering. I wanted to go home. I wanted to see mother, and to marry Annie. This was the end of my aspirations.

When the passengers landed, I did not stop to visit the barber's nor the tailor's—I struck as straight a line as was consistent with the nature of the streets, toward the house of Ketchum & Co.

My heart beat violently as I entered that establishment. All at once it occurred to me that I might hear some very bad news. Hitherto I had been looking only on the sunny side of the picture. Some one asked me what I wanted; I asked if Mr. Gardiner was in. They replied in the affirmative, and I pushed forward into the little room which I knew so well. There sat my uncle, looking not a wrinkle older. He raised his eyes to me with the same sharp, yet kindly look—he did not recognize me.

"Well?" he asked, waiting for me to speak.

"Uncle," I said, "I have come home before the five years were up."

He got down hastily from his high stool, staring at me incredulously—at last he came forward, and shook me by the hand.

"What became of the Adelaide?" was his first question.

"She went to the bottom months ago."

But to relate all the questions which he asked and I answered would be to go over the whole story. I brought the first and only tidings of the ship. I was extremely anxious to know if the other boat had ever been heard from; it had not—Captain Jones never reported to the owners of the vessel. The non-arrival of their ship and her cargo was a severe blow to the firm, coming at a time when there were great monetary fluctuations; but they had borne it, without failing, and are now as prosperous as ever. Minnie and Adelaide are well—the latter married to a partner of the house.

But about home—when had my uncle heard from mother? I trembled as I asked the question, and still more, when he hesitated, as if not liking to reply. "Mother is dead," was my dreadful fear. No—but my father was! He had died in less than six months after I left home, of an attack of pleurisy, brought on by working in the rain. I sat down in a chair and covered my face with my hands. Almost I would rather it had been my mother—for from her I had parted in love and kindness, but from him in anger.

There were other tidings from home, but of less note. Mother had been very much broken down by father's death, and by her anxiety on my account, who had been given up as lost, months ago. My sister Emmeline was married—Impossible!—that young girl, grown into a wife! Yet she was only half a year younger than Annie—why not?

So many changes! I began to dread the idea of going home, almost more than I longed to go. There was no chance to set out that evening, the last express train, which would take me within three miles of the old farm, having already departed. My uncle told me to make myself presentable, and be ready to go home with him at four o'clock. I went out and had my hair clipped of some of its extra length, got a warm bath, and a new suit of clothes, and went home with uncle Gardiner to dinner.

Minnie was housekeeper now. She ran down into the hall, with her old, childish eagerness, when her father came in. She was prettier and sweeter than ever. Was she not my cousin? My heart was full of love for everybody, and I lifted her in my arms, and kissed her again and again, kissing all the women I loved, by proxy

She gave a little feminine shriek, for I was tamed as dark as an Indian, and had a thick growth of hair over the lower part of my face.

"How could I suppose it was my girl-faced cousin?" she asked me, a little later, when I had revealed myself. "I thought it was a bear."

Oh, what a dinner we had, and what an evening after! Uncle uncorked a bottle of his rarest wine, in honor of the occasion, and after the dessert, we retired to the library, where it was midnight before my adventures had been sufficiently related. Minnie cried or laughed, as occasion required, and was immensely interested; but her hand, all the time, was nestled in that of a fashionable-appearing young gentleman who called early and stayed late, and who sat on the sofa beside her without a reproving look from papa. I made up my mind that there would soon be another wedding in the house of Gardiner; and I felt very glad, I am sure, that cousin Minnie had not worried herself any more on my account. Before I went away the next morning, she had asked me if I would not stand up with them.

"With the greatest pleasure, cousin, if I am not married first myself."

I took the first train, and at ten o'clock A. M. was landed at the little village three miles from my mother's house. I left my baggage at the tavern, and set off on a walk. As I had left, so would I return. It was a beautiful June day; the air was redolent of roses. My step was swift and elastic as I trod the familiar road. I saw two or three of the neighbors whom I knew; but no one recognized me, and I gave greeting to none, for I wished to announce my own arrival. Presently I came in sight of that little brown house before which I had paused so long, on the night of my flight. The past rose up with a vividness that overpowered me; I sat down a few moments on a wayside stone, to recover self-possession. So far, I had received no tidings of Annie. My uncle, of course, knew nothing of her, or of what she was to me. Whether she were living or dead—I did not even know that. Nor how she had received the letter I had sent her. Her answer to that letter had doubtless lain long in a foreign post-office, destined to be never received by him who so eagerly wished it. After all, she might never have loved me, nor cared what had become of that boy, Ben—as she and Emma used irreverently to dub me.

Well! I would not sit there longer in doubt and fear. I would go on and learn my fate, were it good or bad. So I rose up, and went on until I stood by the little gate. I could smell the clover, as I breathed its fragrance on that eventful night. Yet it was the perfume of roses which was on the air; the vine hung full of blossoms where it curtained her window. I stopped before the gate, hesitating whether to make some excuse to enter the house, or to go on, first, to my own home.

Perhaps if I waited a few moments, I should see her coming to the window, or out into the yard. Yes! in a little while I heard a gay sound of voices, and two young women came out onto the side porch, stopping to gather some flowers by the steps, before one of them came down the walk. They were Annie and my sister. I longed to fly to both and clasp them in my arms, but I restrained my rapture for the joy of observing them. Emma looked more womanly than I had expected, but very young still for a wife; she had a happy, pleasant face. Annie, too, had grown older. The old merry light had gone from her face—it wore a pensive, even melancholy expression, which more than made up to me for the sweet cheek being a shade less bright, the eyes less laughing. For did not this very sadness prove that she mourned the loss of one whom his own dear sister had already replaced with another idol? So I translated it, while the blood warmed in my heart with a bliss never felt before.

"You'll come over to tea, then?" said Emma, as she came along the walk, looking back to her friend for an answer.

"Yes," was the reply, "if George will come after me."

"Bring your husband along—tell him I invite him," cried the other, by this time so near the gate that she observed me, and gave a little start. I stepped along; but so slowly that she soon passed me, giving me a glance of curiosity as she did so, not dreaming that I was more than a stranger to her. Everything about me had suddenly grown dreary as winter. The song of birds and bloom of roses were gloomier than snow and storm. "Bring your husband along!"—humph, my Annie (as I had called her in my thoughts), was a married woman, too. There was no welcome for me anywhere. In

less than two years I had been forgotten and replaced. I had no home. The world was my home; and one place as dear to me as another.

As I passed heavily on, I debated whether I should go at all to see my mother. My first impulse was to return to the village, and take the train to the city without speaking to any one. But, duty to my mother forbid. I would go and see if she, too, had cast off my memory. One day with her—and then—"the world was all before me where to choose," again.

I opened the front gate and passed around, by the well, to the back sitting-room door. No one was there, and I went on to the kitchen door. Mother sat in a low chair, stringing some currants. How pale and thin she had grown; and how sad she looked, dressed in black. Did she wear the mourning for me as well as for father?

"Can I have a drink of water?" I asked, stepping on the threshold.

She looked up, startled; the next instant the currents went rolling all over the floor, and she lay sobbing on my breast. Mother had not forgotten me; tan, nor beard, nor change of years, could hide me from her eyes.

"I have never given you up—though every one else thought I was foolish to expect to see you again."

A mother's love! how true it is—how boundless! it came, now, like a balm to the wounds my affections had received.

It grieved me to the heart to part from mother again—but my resolution was taken. Emma was overjoyed to see me; but she had a husband, and he had taken my place on the farm, so that I was not needed there. I was glad to meet my brothers, and gave them reason to remember my visit, for I bought them books and other presents, which much delighted them.

But when all was said and done—the past discussed, and the first excitement over—I was ready to go. I stayed a week. In that time I did not see Annie again. Emma sent her word that I was home, and she did not come to tea.

At the end of my week's visit, I kissed my mother, shook hands all around, and was off. Upon my return to New York, I found a vessel nearly ready to sail again for the East Indies. I quickly decided what to do. I would go to Ceylon, and ascertain if Mr. Emmons still felt inclined to renew the offer he once made me. That island seemed more pleasing than ever, since I had been so bitterly disappointed in the friends of my own native land. Annie Anderson was married; and it mattered little where the winds of fortune blew me now:

"Adieu! dear land, with beauty teeming."

Welcome a foreign shore! welcome the favoring breezes which waft me toward Ceylon.

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